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There was a Man sent from God

THOMAS K. BEECHER

TEACHER OF THE PARK CHURCH AT ELMIRA,
NEW YORK

1854-1900

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PUBLISHED BY THE PARK CHURCH
ELMIRA, N.Y.
1900

GEORGE H. ELLIS, PRINTER, 272 CONGRESS ST., BOSTON.

From Mr. Beecher's Journal.

Thursday, Dec. 13, 1849. — 1849 is almost gone. 1850 is close at hand. Just an even half-century seems no bad time for the beginning of my life's labor. I look forward to fifty years of good hard knocks given and taken in much love. Let's see : that would make me retire at seventy-six. Well, if I can keep a clear head and a pure heart so long, then do I long to live so long. If a second childhood awaits me, let me depart and be at rest sooner, sooner, — I care not how soon. . . . How valueless money is in my estimation! With me it shall never accumulate if by any means I can dispense it with any hope of benefit to man.

The Last Days.

On the evening of Wednesday, March 7, 1900, Mr. Beecher spoke to his people at the weekly meeting that was peculiarly his own. The gathering was uncommonly large, for Mr. Beecher was to give the first of five Lenten talks on "The Christian's Investment and Possible Dividends." As inevitably, when he spoke to intimate listeners, he was besieged at the close of the evening with questions; and, as always, he promised developments and explanations of his thought next time.

Two evenings later Mr. Beecher came into the teachers' meeting. He had been dining, in accordance with his Friday habit, at one of the homes that, through a friendship of generations, have called themselves his, and, in consequence, on his entrance, he found the teachers already seated. While the invariable stir of pleasure at the sight of him was passing through the little meeting, he humorously bewailed the scattered seats.

"I should not talk to these people if I were you, Mr. Eastman, spread all over the room like this," he said, and drew them to the front.

Saturday afternoon Mr. Beecher spent with an

ailing man. Sunday morning he was unusually late in leaving the church after service, so that the dispersing congregation and the arriving Sunday-school children met around him below the pulpit. A number of the children had a word with him; all of them saw him.

In the evening Mr. Beecher again came down from the hill to the service. At the close he stood with the congregation, singing,—

> "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
> Is laid for your faith, in His excellent Word!"

And so standing and singing, his people saw him for the last time.

At his own door, a half-hour later, he was stricken with paralysis. The news of his illness broke upon the town next morning, and it became forthwith a town of watchers. Along the streets traversed by the members of his household on their way to and from the hill, the people who, their lives long, had watched him driving by, opened their windows and called out to know how he was. The anxiety for true reports of his condition was so great and so general, that people met in shops and in the streets with no other greeting than, "Have you heard from Mr. Beecher since we have?"

This love of him directed itself, as by instinct, into channels such as Mr. Beecher himself had

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RESIDENCE.

shown those whom he loved. The desire to render a real service to him, or to those in immediate attendance upon him, became imperative. Over the telephone, to the back door of his house, through his physicians waylaid as they passed, came the same prayer: "Tell us what we can do for him! Let us wash, run errands, cook, scrub the floor. What have we that he would like? Take our hands, our horses, our men, ourselves!" One man said: "Mr. Beecher was always such a practical help. I'd give anything to find something that he could really use." And one woman, after he was gone, put her forehead to the floor before his couch and prayed, and then arose to wash the kitchen windows.

But the man himself, over whom watched this love of an entire community, needed nothing during the two days that he lay quietly dying on the hillside, with the town praying for him at his feet. He gave a smile or a hand pressure to one and another, and followed with his eyes those who moved about him. It was evident that he did not suffer and that he lay in peace. Once, with an effort, he spoke to Mr. Eastman. "How are *you?*" he said, and smiled. He did not speak again. On Wednesday morning he fell asleep.

Through that day the church was made ready to receive its father. The hard snow was cleared

away without, and the palms were raised within, by the same love that constantly spoke his name in every street and home. In a window, in the centre of the town, hung his portrait, before which, while the light lasted, stood shifting groups. At one moment two draymen pulled up to the curb, and looked long from their high seats. One said, "Well, when all's said and done, he was the loveliest man that ever lived in Elmira."

"Yes, he was that," answered the other, with tears.

Boys and young men in especial stopped to study the picture; and once two men from families old in the community, sons, by inherited friendship, of Mr. Beecher, but themselves long at variance, stood together in peace before that face.

On Thursday the snow fell heavily. In his church Mr. Beecher lay like a king. A guard of honor from his old regiment watched over him night and day, and his town passed before him and did him homage. In no sense did death attach to him: his own familiar presence, tranquillizing and uplifting, filled the place; and he lay in a state and a majesty not to be described.

Outside, the park silently took on a holy beauty from the falling snow. Hour by hour, from every direction, came a wonderful company, the

friends of one man, — ministers, merchants, farmers; the children, the toilers, the idlers; the good and the bad, the black and the white, the strong and the feeble, the humble and the high. Sometimes little bands of quiet school-children stopped on their way home. Sometimes a family came driving in from the country. Milk-carts stopped before the church, and snow-laden people helped to brush off one another's coats before entering. Men held horses and went in, turn about; and ailing people, housed for weeks, were brought in their neighbors' carriages, or fought their own way on foot, to look once more at Mr. Beecher's face. Almost side by side came the clergyman whose years among Elmira's ministers are second in number only to Mr. Beecher's, and his old sexton, whose service in the town is longer still. A little newsboy ran in, leaving his wheel and papers outside, and came back to them sobbing. A lame colored woman crept up through the storm to the church, explaining: "My people all think Mr. Beecher was their best friend in Elmira. We don't know how we can spare him." One young Roman Catholic said, "When I heard of that good man's passing, I knelt, and said a prayer for his soul." And others of that great communion came to the church, and knelt to pray there before him.

Preoccupied men of affairs, and not of his

church, turned and went back to look a second time, because the sight of him gave them comfort. One of these said: "I don't know how it was exactly, but I had to see that face again. It was simply the most beautiful thing I ever looked at in my life." And when one of the watchers, on duty for almost twenty-four hours, was entreated to spare himself, he answered: "Oh, I can rest afterward. I can't seem to leave Mr. Beecher now." The last to go from the church before it was closed Friday at noon, to prepare for the services, were four little ragged boys, who left him lying under the palms with the soldiers about him, and went away rubbing their eyes with their sleeves.

Thus the town passed through an experience to stir the soul. A multitude of men, women, and children, had suffered a loss that seemed, with unendurable cruelty, to take from earth a companionship, a sympathy, an inspiration without which the painful effort toward right living must sink disheartened. But love, taught by the very man who could so ill be spared, and true to its teacher, was his people's salvation. That love comforted itself with the sense that all was well with the beloved; expended itself in offering him service and honor; and exalted itself by an involuntary, almost an unconscious, reconsecration of many hearts, in remembrance of him.

Funeral Services.

From the Elmira "Advertiser," March 17, 1900.

At three o'clock yesterday afternoon the funeral services of the late Thomas K. Beecher were observed in Park Church, his church home, which stands as a merited and beloved monument to his memory. Fully fifteen hundred of those who loved him gained admittance to the auditorium to pay their respects to their late pastor and teacher; and nearly as many more remained outside throughout the services, which were very simple, in deference to the wishes of the deceased.

The entire city was in mourning over the loss of its first citizen. Business was practically suspended during the hours of the service, and the business streets were deserted. At 2:30 o'clock the fire alarm bell tolled seventy-six times, signifying the age of the deceased. The city schools and municipal offices were also closed. The clergy of the city and members of Baldwin Post, No. 6, G. A. R., commanded by Dr. R. P. Bush, of which Mr Beecher was chaplain, attended in a body.

Rev. Samuel Eastman offered a brief prayer. This was followed by the reading of selections from the Scriptures by Mr. Eastman.

Mr. Eastman's Remarks.

I have collected into groups certain passages from our sacred Scriptures which I will read. They came into my mind with a definite thought of Mr. Beecher; and, as I read them, I believe you, too, will find them interpreted for you with added force by his life as it has been known in this city for nearly half a century.

1. The death of God's prophets.

Deut. xxxiv. 5–8. So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord; and he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor. And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days.

1 Samuel xxviii. 3. Now Samuel was dead; and all Israel lamented him, in his own city.

Gen. xxiv. 1. And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age; and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things.

James ii. 23. He believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the Friend of God.

Gen. xxv. 8. Then Abraham died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his fathers.

Gen. v. 24. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

2. Concerning life and character.

Job xxxi. Doth not he see my ways and count all my steps? If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit; if my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to my hands; if I did despise the cause of any man-servant or maid-servant; if I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail, or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have made gold my hope, or said to fine gold, Thou art my confidence; if I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him. Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin by wishing a curse to his soul. I would declare unto him the number of my steps, as a prince I would go near unto him.

1 Sam. xii. 1–5. And Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I am old and gray-headed; and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day. Behold, here I am: witness against me before the Lord. Whose ox have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I taken any

bribe? The Lord is witness this day. And they answered, He is witness.

3. A man taught of God.

Wisdom of Solomon vii. 22–27. For wisdom, which is the worker of all things, taught me; for in her is an understanding spirit, holy, manifold, clear, undefiled, loving the thing that is good; kind to man, steadfast and sure. For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty. For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness. And being one, she can do all things; and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new; and in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God and prophets.

Is. lxi. 1–3. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek. He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to comfort all that mourn; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

4. The influence of God's man.

Job xxix. Men waited for me. I chose out their way, and sat chief. When I went out through the city, the young men saw me, and

bowed themselves; and the aged arose, and stood up. The princes refrained from talking. The nobles held their peace. When the ear heard me, it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I was a father to the poor. Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel. After my words they spake not again.

A few words of Paul will be a fitting close.

Acts xx. 18–27. Ye know from the first day that I came, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears; and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

None of these things move me [trials of earth and time], neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God,

shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

Rom. i. 16. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

1 Cor. ii. And I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. And now I am ready.

2 Tim. iv. 6, 7. And the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.

2 Cor. iv. We are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though

our outward man perish, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

And now how truly, as Jesus said to his disciples (John xvi.), Sorrow hath filled your heart. Yet I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away, for the Spirit of truth is come. He will guide you into all truth. He will bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Rev. Edson Rogers, of Cincinnatus, an old-time friend of the deceased pastor, was the next speaker.

Mr. Rogers' Address.

We give token of our appreciation of an old, old saying, "A prince and a great man hath fallen." Let us add a word from the New Testament, and say, A prince and a great man hath fallen asleep. Let us remember that this is the style of departure for which this, our father and

friend, did long: that, when the labor of life should be done and he could no longer serve, he should not become burdensome, needing to be served. He has his prayer.

I should be very glad, were it possible, to help your appreciation of this great blessing that came to Elmira so long ago; that has been steadfast as the sunshine, with blessed light for you all.

There are some subjects and some people that we cannot characterize in a few sentences; and our endeavors in this direction come to be very much like the endeavors of creed-makers to put into condensed, philosophic form Bible truths; like an attempt to make definitions of words like light, life, health, beauty. Of such subjects and people we have need to think in parts; to make divisions for our thought, somewhat as, by means of a prism, we separate light into its various colored rays, and then, taking part by part, study and learn. And so I shall content myself with making mention of some detached things.

I remember my first acquaintance with Father Beecher nearly forty-six years ago, during his first summer in the town. I remember him slender, lithe, agile, and strong, — not an athlete, for he had no ambition in that direction, and some thorns in the flesh would have made it impossible; but strong in the freshness of his early manhood, with a body trained to be a ready and

useful servant of his mind and heart, with an eye that saw everything, an ear that heard everything, senses that perceived and measured everything that came within his reach. I remember him with the mobile face, lighting up with wonderful brilliance, and making for me an interpretation of the old Mosaic blessing: "The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." Father Beecher has illustrated that for me many a time.

His hand was deftly trained in many ways: to handle the tools of the artificer; to use the reagents of the chemist and to work practically in the laboratory. He was here and there, everywhere throughout the community, seeing and understanding all the things that were done; sometimes making a toy for a child, at another time building a house for a home, at another time supervising the building of a bridge for the city, at another directing the building of this church home, at other times, with deft fingers, handling the transit instrument and taking time from the stars and marking it for the town. As I remember this departed father and friend, there was in him marvellous variety of ability, of facility, of power.

And the preaching which I have heard, gathered up illustrations from all these rounds of life, sur-

prising now a machinist with a figure from his shop, now a builder with some figure from his domain, now a scientist from his field, a naturalist from his, and students of life from all the walks of life. His body was a ready servant of a mind fully and finely equipped, and of a heart touched with a spirit of love.

In other spheres, more especially pertaining to the mental outfit, we shall remember him also. I will not stay to speak, except in a general way, of the quality of his sermons to the people. He anticipated the higher criticism of these later days; and you cannot find probably, in all the sermons of these many years, a sentence that needs revising because of the advance of science or of Biblical criticism. He dealt in the everlasting verities. He separated out, by his spiritual intuition, and left aside, those things that could not stand under the searchings of science.

Some of us will remember him as an extraordinarily good fellow in meetings of clubs, in philosophical societies, in rational discussions. We remember how, a great many times, when we were confused and hardly knew how to separate things, his clear sight penetrated through the mist, and he gave to us the sentence helpful and uplifting; and again how, when we were wearied with the mental strain, he loosed the tension by a story that threw us into uproarious laughter.

And, although Father Beecher from principle held much in reserve, once in a while he surprised himself and us with such an outbreak of dramatic power as we have seldom seen or heard from any other. His range of mental power and ability was very broad and high.

His æsthetic sense was not allowed control in his active life. It came to light most clearly when he was off duty. But he had a princely relish for the elegances, the refinements, and luxuries of life; a discriminating taste for the dainties of the table; a love for the soft raiment, the art, and luxurious furnishings of wealth; a keen delight in the beauty and grandeur of nature; a fine discernment of the refinements and elegances of literature as of its ruggedness and force; a dainty choice of the right word for the exact setting of the truth, and an ecstatic thrill when, in his own or other's phrase, he found this exact setting; and, highest of all, he found a summary and exponent of earthly beauty in a healthy, growing human life.

Though I may not hope in this off-hand way to paint for you a clear and vivid picture of this life of love, I may suggest to you a way of completing the picture. You will naturally speak often one to another of your experiences with your pastor, and tell one another incidents from your personal knowledge. So you will enlarge your

knowledge, and will quicken and clarify your own mental picture. If then, at some later time, some one shall gather these items of narrative, there will come to pass a lifelike portrait. And especially will the picture become vivid and true as you talk and read, if you are doers, and not hearers only of the words that have come from the faithful teacher and friend. In some such way, I fancy, the gospel of Christ, as we have it, grew into being.

Many a time, through these many years, have I seen this strong man, with clear understanding of his power and of what ease and luxury might come to him if he would, looking from the window of his home on the hillside over this beloved city, by day and by night, with unutterable longings, painful in their intensity. He loved you first and chiefly, people of Elmira; and he loved you to the end. For this love he crucified his strong natural bents. He cultivated, to the utmost, only what could serve men.

Mrs. Eastman's Address.

Friends, there will be hours enough in which to realize our measureless loss. Let us, then, turn from that thought for this one hour. Let us lift up our eyes, and see the earth which God hath

robed for his departing in glistering white. Let us behold the sun shining. Is it not meet for us to dwell upon the measureless blessing of his life, without which there were no such sense of loss as fills our hearts to-day? The measure of the gift is the measure of our sorrow. Even so hath God wrought into the very constitution of this world which he is making, good and evil, light and darkness, joy and grief, life and death. Dying is not failure. It is a part of the success of living. It is the gathering of the ripened harvest of character, the seed of eternal life.

This is not a time for us to praise him who has gone from our presence, to review the years of his fruitful ministry, to speak of the wide reach of his many-sided personality and his influence upon the world. Let the world praise him, and assign him his place among the great spirits of time.

We have lost our father; and our hearts are busy with tender memories that run like golden threads through all the lives and homes of that great company — seen and unseen — to whom he ministered throughout the forty-six years of his unselfish and devoted life in this church. Who can gather up all these threads? Who can measure the blessing? Not one of us here to-day but has some special reason for loving him. What experience of our lives has he not touched with

his tender, inspiring words, or illuminated with his spiritual vision? In our brightest days and our darkest he has opened the treasures of his mind and soul to our common needs, pouring forth wisdom and help, comfort and inspiration, as from a well-spring whose depths were never yet sounded. He has made real to us the eternities in our hours of trial and agony, when the limitations of our humanity pressed hard upon us. He has transfigured our daily lives, and shown us how their most monotonous duties and commonest cares may be a communion with God. He brought God near to us,— the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and so he became all men's comrade, servant, king, and priest. Wherever he went, life grew warmer, friendlier, less sordid, more divine.

I said to him one day, as we were returning from a funeral service where he had spoken with his marvellous tact and sympathy the right word: "Mr. Beecher, you will have to preach your own funeral sermon; for there is nobody else who can do it." He looked at me with that smile which our hearts know, and said, "Perhaps I will." Is not that half-promise fulfilled this day? Could any words spoken by human voice speak to our hearts and to this city as he has spoken to those who have gazed upon the majestic sweetness of his silent face? Have not the holiest emo-

tions stirred within us? Have we not highly resolved that we would gird up our souls anew to follow him as he followed Jesus, the Christ of God?

I questioned with myself to-day: What shall I say? What would he have me say for him to this great company of those who loved him,—a company whose inclusiveness so well represents the greatness of his nature and the goodness of his heart? What would he say to you, young and old, rich and poor, wise and ignorant, good and bad? And of the many inspired utterances that came thronging into my mind, this one sentence, spoken at one of our evening meetings, kept saying itself over in my mind,—it may be that it is his message to you,—"Always think of God as your friend." Was not this the message of his life? In this spirit he went about among his fellows. It was this that made him at home with all men and all men at home with him. No soul ever met him without feeling, consciously or unconsciously, something of the friendliness of God. In the same talk he spoke of the uses of sorrow and failure in revealing the love of God. The room must be darkened before the picture thrown on the screen by the stereopticon can be seen, he said. So our lives must often be darkened before the vision of God's love can appear to our eyes. Can we not bear witness

to this truth to-day as never before? The world is darkened, the shadow of loss has fallen upon this church, upon every home,—yes, upon every heart and life. But out of the darkness shines the immortal vision of the love of God as it was declared in his life, clearer and more beautiful because of the surrounding shadows.

Like his Master, he looked forward to his death as the completion of his ministry. Often in hours of discouragement he would say: "Well, perhaps that which I cannot do by living I shall do by dying. When I am gone, they may remember what I have said to them." In the same high faith, Jesus spoke to his disciples of his own departing: "It is expedient for you that I go away, for the Spirit of truth, the Comforter, will come. He shall bring to mind all things whatsoever I have said unto you." God grant that each one of us, who grieves for him to-day, may receive the Comforter, and by Him be drawn into a closer fellowship with our great teacher than ever we knew in the days of his life among us in the flesh!

Mrs. Eastman closed the service with a prayer that will be remembered as long as the service itself.

The Ministers' Memorial Service.

From the Elmira "Advertiser," March 19, 1900.

Another remarkable gathering took place in Park Church last evening. It was a memorial service for the late widely beloved pastor, Rev. T. K. Beecher. Several of the city churches were closed, in order to allow the people to join in a great memorial service.

The meeting was in charge of Rev. W. T. Henry, D.D., pastor of the First Baptist Church, who, after offering a brief invocation, called upon Rev. A. W. Cowles, D.D., president emeritus of Elmira College, to read the Scripture lesson. He selected part of the sixteenth chapter of John, including a part of the last conversation of Christ with his disciples, and his wonderful prayer for them. At the close of the Scripture lesson he led the great congregation in prayer. After the singing by the quartet of "The Way is Long and Dreary," Dr. Henry rose, under deep emotion, to speak in memory of his late neighbor, friend, and co-worker in the Christian ministry. In his own earnest and familiar manner he paid a beautiful tribute to Mr. Beecher's deep interest in the religious welfare of Elmira.

Our hearts are bowed down with great sorrow to-night. The shadow of a sore bereavement is resting upon us; for our friend and father, Thomas K. Beecher, the greatly beloved man, so wise in counsel, so tender in sympathy, so eloquent in speech, has gone from us. The voice with its flute-like tones, its wonderful intonation, is still. His ministry of forty-six years is ended. He is missed in this pulpit, which he made a throne; missed in the home, which he made a sanctuary, and where those who knew him best loved him most; missed in this city, where he spent most of his life; missed by the brethren in the ministry, by whom he was ever most beloved in counsel; missed by the young and the old. By many a bedside he was an angel of comfort. Some of us mourn with a sorrow that is too deep for tears, as we realize that all that is left to us is the silent dust, now hidden from our eyes. But, while we mourn, we dare not murmur. Let us take time to think how much reason we have to thank God for this life of consecrated service, with its rare combination of gifts and graces, spent, in such holy and consistent fashion, among us. We have need to thank God that he gave to him this good woman, who has brightened his days, made him happy in his work, sent him to this city to build this church, with its beautiful architecture and full equipment for its work,—

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THE PARK CHURCH.

a noble and enduring monument to the success which attended his labors. We have reason to thank God that in the closing years of his ministry he sent to him these beloved friends to be his associates, and who have labored with him so successfully. How much they have done to lighten his burden, prolong his usefulness, and smooth his path, and make this evening of his days tranquil! Above all this, we must thank God for his ministry,— a ministry that stands out in its completeness like a diadem,— a diadem which he has taken to lay at the feet of Him whom he delighted to serve. Both in preaching and praying, as he rose in the contemplation of heavenly things, how often has he made us lose sight of himself in the higher exercise of contemplating the glory of his Lord! Now the tongue is dumb, the lips sealed; yet we can almost hear the echoes of his voice tonight, urging upon you the same blessed truths which he was urging upon you so little time ago. The messenger has gone, but the message remains; and it ought to come with added emphasis and power as we gather here to pay the last tribute to his memory. Our work does not die, only we die: it lives on afterward. This book tells us that this life is as a vapor. It is not in the solidity of its work, in the permanency of the good which it accomplishes. A vapor, indeed, that endureth for a little time,—a vapor like unto the cloud

which at one time shut the Christ from the view of the disciples.

Our brother Beecher died as he would have wished to die. Can we realize it? It is only last Sunday night he was here. What changes are wrought in a little time in this world! Going from this sacred place, dear to him beyond the power of words to express, on the way home came the fatal stroke, then two days of partial consciousness, and then the Beatific Vision.

You and I may talk of these friends as dead, but it seems to me they are more alive than ever. It is only a little veil that divides us. We should never think of them as far away. If they differ from us, it is only in beholding the glory of Christ, reflecting his beauty and glory. We are led to speak of death's victory rather than death's defeat. Much as it has taken from most of us, it is as nothing compared to that which it has no power to take away. He whose loss we mourn to-night still lives,— lives in our memory, lives in the work he has done, and in the gospel he has preached. Into the heavens he has passed, and from its excellent glory we can almost hear his voice to-night urging us to be followers of him as he followed Christ. A little while, and we shall not see him; and yet a little while and we shall see him. We, too, shall go on the same blessed road to the Father. A few more tears, a few

more days of toil, a little more burden-bearing and care-carrying, and then for us the Beatific Vision. We shall behold Him who is our soul's lover and life's guide.

Rev. Dr. Cowles was the next speaker. He said: —

The traveller who visits St. Paul's Cathedral in London may read an inscription in memory of Sir Christopher Wren, the architect, in these words: "Si queries monumentum, circumspico." This inscription would be appropriate here and now in this church building, in this crowded assembly, in this bereaved and mourning city.

The chief monument to Thomas K. Beecher is made up of the loving hearts of an affectionate people, the warm affection of ministerial brethren of every name and creed, and the profound gratitude of great numbers of men, women, and children by whom his charity and sympathy will be long remembered as a precious benediction.

Like the angel who came to the devout Cornelius in his hour of prayer, some messenger from heaven might have whispered in his ear, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. The Master sent me to say, 'Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.' "

Our brother Beecher has all these years been sending on the materials for his "memorial before God." "His works do follow him," not as a price paid for a purchased reward, but as the precious love gift, without money, without price. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Of the forty-six years of Mr. Beecher's work in Elmira, for nearly forty-four years it has been my privilege and pleasure to do my work side by side with him. We came to Elmira when it was a village of less than ten thousand population. He took charge of a small yet energetic and earnest Congregational church, and I undertook the new and perilous responsibilities of Elmira College.

He came with the unparalleled prestige of the world-wide fame of father, brothers, and sisters. Through this distinguished family he had intimate personal relations with a very large number of distinguished men. In his formative, impressible years he came to know many of the best minds in Boston, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, Hartford, New Haven, Brooklyn. He came into touch with the chief leaders of thought in all these cities. In his full manhood he came under the special influence of Dr. Horace Bushnell. It has often seemed to me that Mr. Beecher grew into some resemblance to Dr. Bushnell, in the

rich fertility and bold novelties of thought and in the subtle penetration of his æsthetic imagination.

Mr. Beecher spent his early years in the storm centres of theological controversy. His youth was spent in Boston, where his father was the representative champion of Unitarian orthodoxy, including as principal themes for the pulpit the Divinity of Christ, moderate but well-pronounced Calvinism, revivals — conversion by what Dr. Bushnell called the "ictic" method — like that of Saul of Tarsus, an instantaneous conscious submission to the sovereign will of God, also expiatory atonement for the whole world and hopeless retribution for the finally impenitent.

These were the "orthodox doctrines" taught, with slight shades of variation, in Andover in the time of Dr. Woods, Moses Stuart, and Edward Robinson, in New Haven by Dr. Taylor, and in East Windsor by Dr. Tyler.

They also prevailed throughout what was afterward known as New School Presbyterianism. Dr. Lyman Beecher became president of Lane Seminary, a Presbyterian theological school near Cincinnati. His theology, which had been too austere for Boston, was considered by the Scotch Presbyterians of Southern Ohio and Kentucky as intolerably lax, and he was prosecuted for heresy.

These acrimonious controversies seem to have completely alienated the Beecher family from the Presbyterian Church; and they preferred to follow the example of Oliver Cromwell, and embrace radical independency, with unrestricted liberty of opinion and unchallenged freedom of individual conscience.

They also adopted "educational conversion" of children and youth in preference to the sudden or instantaneous conversion of adults, as the normal method for the perpetuity and increase of the Church.

In view of all these distracting controversies we cannot wonder that Thomas K. Beecher came to Elmira with the settled impression that organized authority in religion had had its day; that traditional customs, enforced by authority, tend to insincerity; that solemn sourness and sanctimonious melancholy had better become obsolete; and that a new dispensation should begin with child-piety, pleasure-piety, and the piety of sincere brotherly love and self-denying charity.

Mr. Beecher, with his large and versatile resources, his rare discernment of the forces of moral and spiritual growth, boldly ventured to try this new dispensation. He touched with his own life all vital elements of personal influence. He cultivated his people as an expert florist cultivates new varieties of flowers. Out of plain

daisies he produced lovely chrysanthemums, and from wild roses he brought out superb La Frances and Maréchal Neils. He himself was like that splendid tree of the first Psalm: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

Rev. Dr. Marcus, the Jewish rabbi, was the next speaker.

Most esteemed friends, extending to you and to Mrs. Beecher the heartiest sympathies and sincerest condolences of the entire Jewish community on this mournful occasion, I would say I wish it were possible to take a flying trip around the entire world with this solemn and sanctified assembly. I would then make a stop in Vienna, in Moscow, and in St. Petersburg, and extend invitations to the burgomaster of Vienna, to the head of the Russian Church, and to the czar of darkness to show them how Jews and Gentiles alike mourn the loss of an illustrious Christian teacher. Surely, this is Beecher's church, and here are the gates of heaven! Father Beecher understood how to build not only iron, but also spiritual bridges between denominations.

The Talmud literally teaches pious peoples of all nations and creeds of the world will participate in the enjoyments of the world to come. If there ever lived a man whose piety was perfect, his name was Thomas K. Beecher. He was a great philosopher and an innocent child at the same time. "Keep the commandments," was the subject he preached and practised every moment of his life. Even the orthodox Jew admired his Christianity, and Christians appreciated his Judaism. His wonderful book on the religions of the world has become the seven-branched candelabrum, furnishing excellent light in the temple of humanity. He found something to admire in every religion, and understood how to harmonize all religions.

"And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Followers of Moses and Jesus, through certain misunderstandings, built walls of prejudices to such an extent that no Jewish rabbi was allowed to administer Christian sacraments. Neither was the Christian allowed to preach in a Jewish pulpit. Thank God, I saw Mr. Beecher bringing to completion the rites of a Jewish confirmation, giving his blessing to the children of my congregation, and reprimanding them to keep the law as though he had been an orthodox rabbi for twenty-five years. We asked ourselves repeatedly, Where did the man learn all the refined idioms of Juda-

ism? Our children are proud of having been honored with a benediction of this sainted teacher of humanity. Perhaps it was the first time in the history of the world that a Jewish congregation shed tears in its own synagogue, last Friday evening, in honor of the memory of a noble Christian preacher. We feel that we have lost a champion of our cause and the crown of our community. Our children never experienced any unpleasantness from the pupils of your Sunday-school, because the teachers in charge of Mr. Beecher knew how to impart the crucifixion without harming the Jews. Our people have always felt perfectly at home in Mr. Beecher's church. And all I have aimed to be is a worthy assistant minister of Thomas K. Beecher in my pulpit.

The prophet Malachi pictures the boy who was to administer to the religious needs and wants of the people in the following words: —

"My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips. He walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from sin. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge; and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts." If the Lord of hosts ever found such a perfect human

messenger, his name was Thomas K. Beecher. Happy the generation that had such a living model! Help us, help us, O God, to copy from this model, and continue the works of peace and equity Mr. Beecher so illustriously began.

The Bible relates that after the death of Moses the children of Israel assembled, and said to Joshua, "As we hearkened unto Moses, we will hearken unto thee: only the Lord thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses." The very same words we say unto you, Mr. and Mrs. Eastman. Take courage, and be strong to take up the tremendous responsibilities which rested upon the great teacher. His memory be blessed. You have already gained the confidence of the people far beyond the spheres of your beloved congregation. I hope and trust that the Lord will enable you to erect a living monument to Rabbi Beecher by pursuing the work of peace among the various denominations of this city. The only way we can honor the memory of Thomas K. Beecher is to help in that noble work of peace.

While we are united in prayer for the welfare of Mrs. Beecher and for the prosperity of this entire congregation, let us continue to walk in the path outlined by Mr. Beecher, so that, when our earthly career expires and we are called upon to meet our Maker, may we then be ready to enter the gates of eternity with perfect harmony in our

hearts, peace in our conscience, knowing that we have utilized every moment of our life for our moral improvement and for the elevation of suffering humanity as Mr. Thomas K. Beecher did. This, O God, grant us in thy endless mercy, which works wonders in this world, and yet more in the world to come.

Rev. Dr. George H. McKnight, rector of Trinity Church, was next introduced to the congregation, and spoke in substance as follows: —

A great writer has said, "Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them."

Mr. Beecher was born to greatness. He came of one of the most distinguished families of America.

With such a prestige of birth and relationship, Thomas K. Beecher, whose death is now mourned in this city, could not help, we might almost say, being great and distinguished. But, aside from his birth and connection, he himself was a man of genius. As a writer and speaker, he had great versatility of talent. He was a word painter. He had, like his brother Henry Ward, great powers of illustration and the art of putting

things in a most interesting and effective way. I shall never forget the first time I ever saw him and heard him in the pulpit. It was in the first year of my ministry in Elmira, and in the old wooden structure that stood where this commodious and imposing edifice now stands. It was on a week-day night, and he was giving a course of sermons to his people. I noticed on entering the building that the congregation, about two hundred, were all up in front, and that the back seats were all nailed up with narrow strips of boards, or laths.

I thought to myself, Mr. Beecher understands, as all public speakers do, that, when a congregation is at a distance, the currents of electricity are cut off, so that he loses in a measure his power over them. His sermon was a plain, simple gospel sermon, — an exaltation of Christ. There was no effort to be grand or eloquent, no rhetorical flourishes, no straining after effects, nothing high-flown or sensational about it. But it produced a great impression. I was charmed with it, and drawn irresistibly to the speaker. Afterward, when we became well known to each other, I found that on various questions we were widely apart in our views; but this did not break our social intercourse or friendship.

As a theologian, Mr. Beecher was a free lance. He followed no school, did not claim to hold any

systematic divinity or to believe in any church or ecclesiastical organization; but, as an independent thinker, he built up his theology upon the Scriptures, without regard to precedents or authorities. In his social intercourse he was most entertaining, brimful of wit and humor, and fertile in his resource of anecdote and illustration. But he greatly varied in his moods. At times he was exuberant in spirits, again despondent. At times his feet seemed to be on the highest peaks of the Delectable Mountains; everything around him was radiant, and the heavens almost seemed open. Then, again, he was down in the Valley of Humiliation or Slough of Despond. Some thought him pessimistic. I do not think he was a pessimist in any philosophical sense; but at times, in view of the state of society, the sins and crimes of the day, he seemed to despair of any improvement.

In all ecclesiastical relations he was courteous and honorable. In the many years that we were neighbors side by side I never knew him to violate the rules of clerical courtesy or ecclesiastical courtesy in the least degree.

If I were to name what seemed to me his most prominent characteristics, I should say unselfishness, charity, and magnanimity. He was not self-seeking. He did not aim at his own aggrandizement. He was great in his charity. I

do not mean in alms-giving. That he was generous in his gifts goes without saying. But I mean that charity which thinketh no evil, which refrains from harsh and censorious judgment. Though at times attacked, though bitter things were said of him, yet I never heard him say a bitter thing in return. It would seem that he had no resentment of feeling; or the most wonderful control over himself.

He was magnanimous in his charity, merciful to the worst offenders, and forgiving to his enemies. These characteristics, with his mental force and genius, combined to make his unique personality, — a personality that was winning and magnetic in the highest degree.

Of his success in his ministerial work, it is hardly necessary to speak. We have object-lessons here more potent and eloquent in their silence than any words that could be spoken. This large edifice, with its splendid auditorium and appointments for work and play; the great congregations which for years came to hear him; the Sunday-school, with its seven or eight hundred scholars, — all these witness to his zeal, industry, and ability.

Mr. Beecher has entered within the veil. The glass through which he saw, and through which we all now see, is broken; and he sees face to face, and knows even as he also is known.

The problems of life and death, of sin and redemption, of God's government and man's destiny, are solved. All those questions we have discussed, all those mysteries which so perplex and often oppress us, are made known. What a transition! From life, through the grave and gate of death to life again,—to an endless life, a tearless life! How the soul of the believer in Christ must be thrilled with joy and rapture to realize that he is in that world of beauty and glory where sin and sorrow are banished, where there are no more pain and no more death; for the former things are passed away.

All this we believe Mr. Beecher has realized. With him the battle is over, and the victory won through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rev. Dr. Chapman, chaplain of the Elmira Reformatory, spoke briefly of the great privilege that had been afforded him in being able to come into close contact with Mr. Beecher, whom he had always looked upon as a great university and a source of inspiration to him in his work and ministry. He was followed by Rev. Isaac Jennings, D.D., pastor of the First Presbyterian Church.

I stand before you to-night, my friends, not to eulogize Mr. Beecher. That has been done, and well done, by others. He was worthy of it, and your own heart's praise eulogizes him more than the words of others can do. I shall then strive to draw a lesson from his life for our own teaching, so that that life shall not have been lived in vain. But when I approach that great, many-sided character, and undertake to select one of its many phases as a theme, I confess to a sense of inadequacy. You have seen a very small boy helping his father about the lawn. You have seen him approach the great bushel basket, filled with leaves or whatever they may have been gathering, and undertake to pick it up and carry it. He cannot reach the handles: his little legs and arms are as yet too short. He cannot reach around it; its bulk is too great. He just cannot get hold of it. And so I feel as I strive to take out from this many-sided man one phase of character and hold it up for our study to-night. Which shall it be? His social side? His intellectual side? His moral side? His professional side? His citizen side? He had all these, and they were marked by his own individuality. But they do not serve my purpose at this time.

I have heard it said, as I doubt not you have, a number of times in the past few days, that he

will be remembered longest for those characteristics wherein he was different from others, — in other words, for his peculiarities. Stories of his deeds which have seemed strange, and sayings which have defied the common laws of conventionalism, will remain after all else he has done or said shall be forgotten or hidden away in the hearts of those who have known him best or loved him most. You have said, and others have said and believed, perhaps, that was "the Beecher of him." We get into the habit of saying things and doing things by habit, but that was not a characteristic of Thomas K. Beecher. Habit has its place and value. It is a crutch to help some natures along, a storehouse to gather up accumulations, a ladder by which we climb to higher things. But it always seemed to me that Mr. Beecher strove to retain his supremacy to habit, and succeeded even to the end of his life. For this reason he belonged to no school, was larger than all creeds, and could be tied up in no bundle with red tape. It seemed as though, whenever he found any particular thing growing into a habit with him, good or bad, he took himself to task, and remained the same self-mastered man to the end.

He seemed to fear also lest he should be guided, held, or swerved by public opinion. Now public opinion is valuable for lesser minds.

It is a far more potent force than jails or laws or courts. But public opinion was not a force with him. He did not believe in the justness of it, and took issue with Mr. Lincoln's famous saying in that direction. He never asked what others thought or said in forming his opinions or performing his acts. And when he found himself differing from the public, and visited with its criticisms, he went right on his own appointed way, without reply and without receding.

Now, if Mr. Beecher was neither a bundle of habits, as they tell us most men are, nor the subject of a code or system of laws called for sake of a short name "Mrs. Grundy," what was he? Was he a drifter blown hither and yon by each passing breeze? Far from it! No man would for a moment say this of him. It is this difficulty which the critics have met by saying, "Oh, he was a Beecher!"

I desire, then, to offer you a deeper interpretation. He could afford to defy public opinion,—did I say defy? ignore is better,—because he believed he saw what was right; and the issue generally proved it. He could afford to be inconsistent with himself, because he believed he was right in so doing; and the issue ultimately accredited him. He believed himself led, and he followed the leading without reference to preceding positions or to succeeding consequences.

He saw duty and truth and life, as it were, in far-away glimpses that seemed real and present; and to these he was true, following them till another or different glimpse was vouchsafed. He believed himself led of God, and followed, not by the light of logic lamps nor by the guide boards of society laws, but by the simple direction of his intuition, through living singly and simply his life to the end. Over him the lusts of the flesh, the heat of the eye, and the pride of life had no power; and that they had no power made his fellow-men believe in him, and gave him his power with men.

That he made no mistakes will not be claimed. Otherwise, we could not call him human. Nor can it be said that his light deceived him or was inconsistent. It was divine light shining through human media; and we realize the power of it, even if at some time distorted or refracted by the medium.

And now the lesson for us: Is it that we shall be different from others, set aside the power which accumulation gives us, and disregard the commands of public opinion? I think not. Our lesson is that we cannot be two things at the same time. We cannot be guided by an acquired wisdom and divine light at one and the same time unless assured they are one. We cannot be controlled by public opinion and God's

teaching at the same time. If the world rules, the love of the Father is not in us. He will work out our mission for us according to our individuality. We may and ought to have a different one from Mr. Beecher and from each other. But the great question is not one of individuality or peculiarity, but of simplicity, singleness of aim, and entire dedication to God's will, in a world where any will rules and governs but His.

Before calling on Rev. Allen F. De Camp to pronounce the benediction, Dr. Henry spoke as follows: —

Brethren of the Park Church, I know how much he loved you. And he never loved you better than during the few closing years of his life, when infirmities were so sorely pressing upon him. I pray for God's richest blessing on you all, because you so oft refreshed his servant and were not ashamed of his chain.

I fear, however, that some of you are inclined to make a mistake. When Jabez Bunting, the great Methodist preacher, died, an unwise Methodist minister, preaching a funeral sermon, said that, when Jabez Bunting died, "the sun of Methodism set." No sooner were these words uttered

than one of the audience cried out, with that liberty which is peculiar to Methodism, "Glory to God, that's a lie!" No doubt, when Thomas K. Beecher passed away from this church, a glory passed away along with him; and yet you need not feel that your sun has set. He would not have you stand gazing up into the heavens whither he has gone, but rather that you should draw the girdle a little tighter and push on God's work with greater vigor.

The memorable meeting closed with the benediction by Mr. De Camp.

Mrs. Eastman's Sermon,

Sunday, March 26.

Death worketh in us.

I am sure, dear friends, that you could not listen to any sermon I might preach this morning, for your minds are preoccupied with grief. You are passing through that trying period of readjustment which is so slowly and painfully achieved after a great loss. We go through the motions of our former days, but with absent minds, half-heartedly.

In some such spirit I doubt not many of you are here in the accustomed place of worship to-day. It is not as it used to be. That pervasive presence, which made this place the home of our souls, is gone; but the habit of coming holds, and, if we are glad of anything, we are glad to be here, though this is of all our darkened ways the loneliest.

Knowing your mood by my own, I shall only try to share with you in familiar speech, as if we sat about the fireside, a stricken household, some of the thoughts which have been busy in my own mind through all the bewilderment of this sudden change that has passed upon our world.

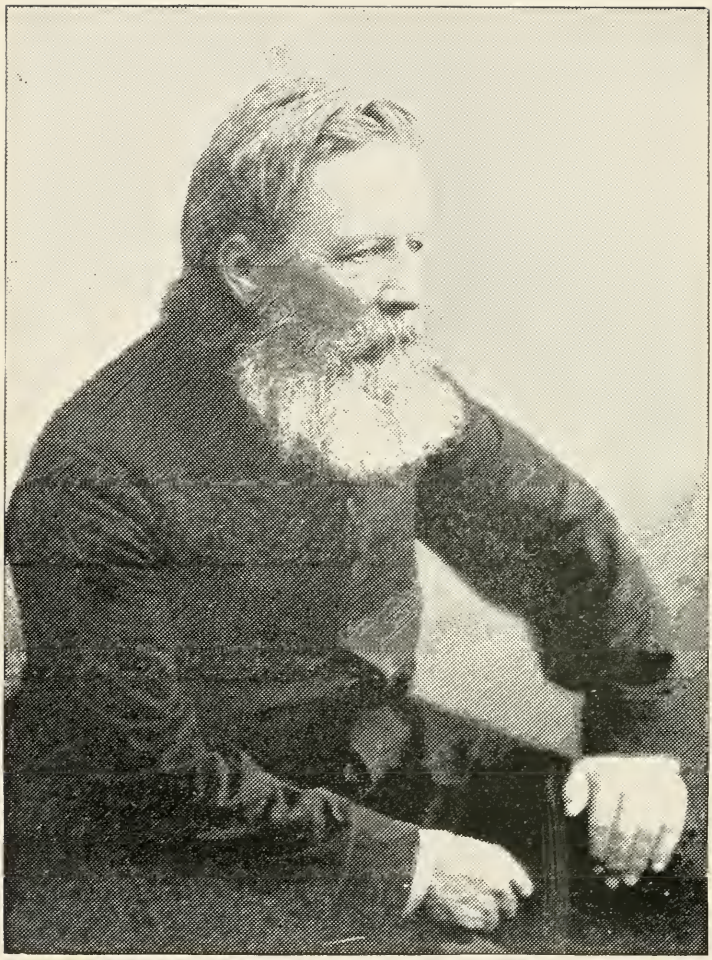
Your own thoughts may be better for you. If

so, you will more closely cherish them, hearing mine. But for your thoughts and mine, and those of many hearts that are being revealed in these days, there is a fitting text (by what preachers call accommodation) in the Scripture we have read this morning: "Death worketh in us."

In one of the many letters that have come from those whose longing eyes have been toward this place in the past ten days, these words occur: "I feel that I have missed a great experience."

Does not this suggest what we all feel? We have passed through a great experience, big with meaning for our immortal selves. The mighty tide of feeling that has swept over us must surely bear us to higher levels of thought and feeling, else will its receding waves leave us more hopelessly stranded than before upon the sands of worldliness and doubt.

Phillips Brooks speaks somewhere of "the larger liberty of death," into which his glowing imagination follows the enfranchised spirit as it leaves this world. It is not my purpose to dwell upon this thought: we know not the blessed estate of the freed spirit. I am glad that we do not know, else might duty and joy here lose all their meaning: we could not stay to finish our day's work. We know the motive and inspiration of that blessed life; for it is one in all worlds, as God is one.



But I would speak of the liberating influence of death upon us who gaze from this side upon its mystery and are exercised by its power. What subtle, subduing, uplifting, reproving, redeeming powers have been at work in us during the past two weeks! — powers that have been stored up in our minds and hearts, as day by day our great friend and teacher walked familiarly with us, touching all the common things of our daily work and pleasure with his divinely inspired imagination, as he played with us or worshipped with us or talked to us, as he blessed our bridals and our burials, as he warned us of the snare of success or snatched us from the consuming fires of despair. How all his looks and words and acts laid up in the unconscious deeps of our being have been set free by the touch of death! How they flash forth in all their illuminating, comforting, or condemning power, some of them sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit!

Many times during these days, as I have read the almost adoring tributes to his greatness and goodness that have arisen from the inmost hearts of all sorts and conditions of men, I have wished that he might know, that it might have been my privilege to tell him, how he was loved and honored and blessed. And yet I know how he would have looked at me, as often he did look

when I came to him with some word of eulogy or love that I had heard spoken of him, — how, when my words were ended, he has said, "But that doesn't butter any parsnips!"

For sentiment that subserved no higher end he had no use. He was a utilitarian idealist. Feeling that did not incarnate itself in life and action was to him worse than wasted. He knew that he was loved as few men have ever been, and he was grateful, though never overburdened as by debt, — for he loved much; but the love of his fellow-men was not what he sought. Like Jesus, he longed to see love working in men. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." But I am sure that, if he could go about our streets now, if he could sit with us in our homes, go with us to our shops and offices, listen to our talk, — nay, hearken to our thoughts, — he would begin to see of the travail of his soul in us, and be satisfied. He would know that love is at last working the divine miracle of regeneration.

To this end let us dwell thoughtfully upon the great experience through which we are passing, that we may more clearly discern that in it which may be made permanent by being wrought into the only enduring product of this world, — human character. What is his death working in us, and to what end?

First, the conviction that death is not an acci-

dent, a catastrophe in the universe. It is not the end of a life even in this world. It is a part of living, the most important part, as the harvest is more than the seed. The reaper cuts down the grain, and we say it is dead; but it is gathered into the garner, and enters upon a new career in a hundred forms of life to which it ministers. "If I go away, I will come again"— in a myriad souls that through me receive power to become sons of God.

Death is not a negative influence: death works. I never see the sign of mourning upon a door that I do not feel the power of God at work in that house. On the side of the material there is silence and darkness and the stupor of grief: on the side of the spiritual there is swift motion, the shining of unaccustomed light, and the voice of God. I doubt if ever a death occurred, of the weakest or wickedest, which did not liberate some spiritual power in those who beheld it. The dying of a year-old babe has more power to break down the thick wall of materialism built round a worldly family than all the arguments and appeals heard in a lifetime of church-going. In haunts of vice and crime, where death has come by violence, there often arises from the lifeless body of the victim an awe before which the murderer flees to the vengeance of human law as to a refuge.

Death works. No soul, once exercised thereby, returns to exactly the same level of thought and feeling.

And the greater the life, the mightier is the power of its dying. This truth finds supreme illustration in the influence of the death of Jesus upon his earliest disciples, and through them upon all who have believed on his name. How mightily his dying wrought in the souls of those who walked with him to the cross and beheld his end, casting them down in sorrow and despair, then moving them to agonizing questioning and to hope, then rising with them at last into that triumphant argument of the faith that works by love, "Thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption"!

Through all the story of the apostles' deeds and words, you may trace this ever-recurring thought of the dying of the Lord Jesus. It is the great fact of his life,—of all life. It must be harmonized with all else in heaven and in earth. Nay, it is so stupendous a fact that all else must be harmonized with it,—sin and sorrow, God and man, past and future, time and eternity,—all must be adjusted to the dying of this blameless one, else the world itself is a hopeless enigma. Their method of harmonizing with the death of Jesus all things in heaven and earth does not so much concern us: it was the

best they could devise, and reflected the limitations of their knowledge and experience. The fact of universal import is that the disciples of Jesus felt the immense significance of his death; that their hearts could not be comforted nor their reasons satisfied until they saw that great event in harmonious relation with all other facts of human experience, until that supreme act in the tragedy of human life should be justified by its issue,— in the redemption of the whole race of man. So the death of Jesus, as the fruition of his life, rightly became the central truth of Christian theology. "Always bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifest in us."

Oh, what wealth of meaning, what life and power, hath been breathed into those old words for some of us in these great days since our own great teacher fell asleep! His dying the crowning act of all that he hath wrought for our salvation! Read your New Testament much and often. Sorrow and love wrote it. It is only to be read through tears. Never again in all our earthly pilgrimage will such a light arise upon the word of God for some of us as shines to-day from the passing of this great shepherd and bishop of our souls, in whom that word became flesh and dwelt among us. Let us take heed, as to a light shining in a dark place, if so be the day-star may arise in

our hearts. There is a new meaning for us in the old, old story of a life dedicated to the will of God from its youth, — a life that mingled freely and familiarly with all other lives, doing them good, but whose source and inspiration was ever in communion with God; of a great heart bearing men's sins and carrying their sorrows, but committing its own cause to God; of a spirit calmly facing shame and failure, taking at last the cup of death and making it the cup of eternal fellowship between God and man.

And you shall read of the acts of the apostles to-day, and feel as never before the reasonableness of all that they did and suffered. You shall follow that ardent apostle who loved to call himself the bond slave of Jesus Christ, through the mazes of his labored arguments with Jew and Gentile, wise and unwise, with quickened sympathy and comprehension. You shall see how he lived his way through to that sublime challenge which he flung to fate: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate

us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

But death, like life, hath diversities of operation, but the same spirit. To all of us death has been a revelation of love. "We did not know how much we loved him!" we cry. We did not dream that the world could be so cold, wanting him. We did not realize how we had warmed ourselves at his fires. We thought sometimes they burned low, and we pitied him! God help us! Who will kindle such fires again for us?

And we have learned, too, the inherent selfishness of love. One lad who loved him, writes: "There's no more Elmira for me. I'd give a year of my life to see him once more standing on the corner by the park, waiting for a car!"

We do not speak so frankly out of our heart's hunger, but we are not strangers to such a longing. Some chastened ones there are who say, "We would not bring him back." Yet to behold once more the simple majesty of his patient waiting, to flee unto the strong tower of his presence, though he spoke no word, to know the rich reward of his approving smile,— thank God, we are not trusted with the power to bring him back to the weariness and fainting of these latter days.

But let us turn from the selfishness of love to a better revelation, even the great longing we

have known to translate our love and sorrow into service. One of the hardest tasks that ever fell to my lot was the answering of the eager, aching questions that came to me almost every hour during the brief days of his suffering. "Can I do anything? Is there an errand upon which I might be sent? Is there any lowly office I can fill in the home? Is there anywhere in all the horizon of that household a need that I can meet?"

Are these deep longings awakened within us only to be thwarted? Not so. "Our hearts are in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water; he turneth them whithersoever he will." Not to pour their rich treasures into the tomb, not that they be exhaled in sighs and groans and lamentations, but that they bless the living in the power of his spirit who no longer needs what they can do. What a comfort it must have been to the disciples of Jesus to remember after he had gone away what he had said of the poor and the sick, the stranger and the prisoner! "Inasmuch as ye serve these, ye serve me."

So death worketh in us.

"I'm sorry I did not write to him oftener. I might have brightened a moment for him now and then." So writes a young man who loved him. Is it a vain regret? No; for the next words are, "I will write to my grandfather now."

Another letter comes, enclosing a little sum of money. "Will you please use this for missions? It is my memorial offering, — a drop in the bucket of the world's need; but it means a good deal to me, and I want to do it for his dear sake." Is not this what Paul felt when he said, "I am debtor to all men for Christ's sake"?

One meeting me on the street said, with streaming eyes, "We must seek now — each for himself — as never before unto the source of his strength and inspiration." So the disciples might have spoken to each other, when they remembered how Jesus had said, "I go to my Father and your Father, my God and your God."

Another speaks of the last scene, when to those who gazed upon his face in the calmness and content of its last sleep it seemed as if in it were reflected the joy of the revelation that after all his labor had not been in vain in the Lord. "That last scene has done more to drive away what traces of agnosticism were in me than any sermons I ever listened to."

Do not these testimonies express that which we all feel, each in his own way? Has not his dying loosened some chain that bound you, stirred some generous impulse in your soul, sent a word of love and pity forth from your heart that had been frozen fast in scorn? I cannot believe that one of us has shed idle tears for him. They have

been cleansing, renewing, illuminating tears, through which every scene and every relation of life is beheld more solemn, yet more sweet.

Many a hard man of business in this last week, I doubt not, has forborne to turn the screws of legal justice upon the poor and the ill-deserving as tight as he was able, remembering this good man's dying. Many a poor soul, bound in affliction and iron by evil habits, has made one more effort to be free, thinking upon the loving kindness of that silent face which will never reveal to him again the pity of God.

The spontaneous movement on the part of so many of our fellow-citizens to build a monument to his memory is most eloquent witness to that which his death is working in this whole community. Many a gift to that fund will be the expression of a divine emotion in souls that we have thought dead in trespasses and sins.

"There's a good many who'll miss him that ain't in any church," said one poor man. To all such may his dying be gain, as his living has been Christ!

And the image of marble or of bronze will not be a vain memorial, for about it will gather the gospel of his life. Fathers will tell their children of that which he began to do and to teach, until that silent figure will become a power in the lives of each succeeding generation, shaming cowardice and sin, inspiring truth and mercy.

But it is not in monuments of bronze or marble, not even in this great building which so fitly embodies his ideal of a meeting-house for the worship and work of God's people, not in any of these that his enduring memorial will be found, but in us, in you, his people, the sheep of his hand, who have received his doctrine and shared his life. You are his living epistles. By your lives will his work and his word be judged.

To you he was a teacher sent from God. Such an one is not given to every church. Many good and faithful ministers there are and have been, administering with all diligence the duties of their office; but few speak with authority. They speak as the scribes, not therefore wrongly or unwisely, but as they have received the word from other men. They represent a man-made system of doctrine. They represent a human organization. Their office is honorable, their service to society great. Nicodemus was such an one, deservedly a leader in Israel. But he knew that there was something better than the wisdom of the Sanhedrim; and he recognized that better thing in Jesus, when he said, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God." The appeal of our great teacher was never to the law and the testimony, but to every man's conscience in the sight of God. At rare intervals in the long history of religion there arises a man with courage to throw

off all human authority and think his own thought through, to look all the facts of the world and his own being square in the face, with an eye single for truth; one who will, moreover, risk his all in putting the truth he discerns into deed, not counting the cost, so that the creed which his lips declare his life incarnates. Such a teacher speaks with authority, as who says, "I believed, therefore have I spoken." Most of us say, "I have learned, therefore have I spoken." It is not likely that any of us will see another like him who is gone from us. Why should we? Is it not enough for us that we address ourselves hereafter to obeying, and so proving that which he hath taught us? His place is indeed vacant in this pulpit. It has always been vacant since he left it, to crown his word with that surpassing deed of Christ-like humility, which so often made me think with swelling heart of Jesus washing the disciples' feet, — to sit with so large and noble a patience listening to the lisping of that truth which he had been wont to declare in all its sublime reach and power. How costly was this, his last service, in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, we shall never know; for he made no sign.

Yours has been a high privilege; and you and your fathers, I am persuaded, have not been unworthy of it. I have said that there are few

teachers sent direct from God, and there are few disciples ready to receive such. I have heard that Henry Ward Beecher said to his brother, when at one time he was debating the advisability of leaving Elmira: "Don't leave the Park Church. They can appreciate you and endure you!" And it is the glory of this church that this was true. A teacher sent from God is bound to make trouble where he comes. He who denies all human authority over his conscience, who fearlessly examines all religious systems and social conventions, taking what is good for him and rejecting what is bad, who is never moved out of his way by popular enthusiasms, — who can see both sides of every question, and bravely state them, — he must often be a sore trial to the average sense of propriety in a community. We do not share his greatness, and we cannot know his compensations. It speaks much for the largeness of nature, for the sincerity and devotion to truth of that little band of his earliest disciples, that they were able to cleave unto him through what must often have seemed to them the vagaries of his genius, as he followed ideas and ideals which brought him into disrepute with religious and social leaders.

They were discerners of spirits, — the fathers and mothers of this church. Recognizing the power of God in their great teacher, they stood

firm and patient about him until the little whirlwinds of prejudice and passion were overpast. We have reason to be humbly conscious of the Christian manhood and womanhood for which this church has stood in the past and which it illustrates to-day; but, beloved, we are not as good as we ought to be, when we consider the great light in which we have walked.

Mr. Beecher once said to me, "What we need in the Park Church is conviction of sin." Are we not realizing that wholesome experience now, as we stand in the light of his life transfigured by his death, and measure our ways by his ways, our thoughts by his thoughts? We followed him afar off. We were like those who thronged about the Saviour, loving to hear his words, bringing their children to him for his blessing, craving his gracious presence to crown their feasts, leaning hard upon him in the day of calamity, but turning away carelessly or sorrowfully, when following him meant sacrifice and suffering. He never failed us in joy or sorrow, in high endeavor or in dismal failure. But we failed him. I doubt not his heart often yearned for a spiritual companionship in us that he missed.

Jesus said, "I go away, but I will come again unto you." And the history of the Christian Church since that day is the long fulfilment of that promise. To his little band of timid, half-

hearted followers he did return in the power of the spirit, and made them heroes and martyrs of his cross, evangelists and witnesses for him unto the ends of the ages. For them to live was for Christ to live. Through them his work was to be done. He had, humanly speaking, no other means; and he needed none. So may the departure of our great teacher work in us. So will it work if we quench not the spirit that shines in us to-day, lighting up his words, transfiguring his life. Men die and institutions pass away, but the word of our God liveth and abideth forever in the hearts of those who receive and transmit it. This is the true procession of the Holy Ghost of which the fathers spoke.

I am sure that I speak for you all when I say that we are determined to follow our wise and loving guide more closely, since he has passed into the heavens, than ever we did before. We have highly resolved that what he could not accomplish by his life in the flesh he shall work in us by the power of his spirit. If we are reconciled to God by his death, much more shall we be saved by his undying life in our minds and hearts!

How often have people said to us: "The Park Church is Mr. Beecher. It is unique, like himself; but it will die with him"! Shall such words trouble our peace? The seed dies, but brings forth the harvest an hundred-fold. If we

could look forward through many generations to a time when Mr. Beecher's name shall have become a beautiful tradition, should we find the Park Church, think you, still living as an organization, a centre of religious faith and spiritual endeavoring as to-day? There is no prophet among us to answer that question. From our narrow standpoint of to-day we say that we hope it will so live, and ever grow in power and usefulness. But, if that hope be vain, we know that the living seeds of the eternal word planted in souls here during his ministry will be bearing fruit in the lives of all coming generations, even unto the end of the age; if not here in the Park Church, then in some other part of God's world where they are more needed. Let us be as he was, unanxious about the church. When people ask us what we are going to do now, let us say, "Each day's duty as we are able." We will watch without fear or anxiety to see what God will do. There was a man sent from God to us. He did his work in us and for us, and he was not; for God took him. Is it for us to seek by any human wisdom to conserve the influences of his life in an effort to keep alive any institution through which he chanced to do his God-appointed work? God will care for his own word,—the seed: he will give it a body as it pleaseth him.

If he hath indeed more work for the Park

Church to do as a church, it will live to do it. But we must not fancy that we are intrusted with the carrying on of our great leader's work. That is being done by the spirit of God in every soul that heard his message and became obedient unto it, and they are not all members of the Park Church.

I would that we might all be baptized into a spirit of divine freedom from care, — that our temporalities might be administered as unanxiously as our spiritualities. This is possible, if only we can realize that there is nothing we must have, either as a church or as individuals, save God himself. Is not this the great lesson of his life? To this choice of the righteousness of God's kingdom all things were added unto him, but he could have lacked all. He knew how to abound and how to suffer want.

But once more. Death alone gives us the right setting for that which we call life. A great change has passed upon our familiar world. "Earth looks so little and so low." The proportions of things are altered. What yesterday was so important, seeming to demand our immediate attention, we find to-day can wait, — to all eternity, if need be. Other things that had been laid away in the dark closets of our consciousness, as matters which some day we would bring forth and regulate, start up, and demand instant action.

"To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts!" The immortal life, the world to come, about which last week we speculated idly, has become the passionate demand of our reason and our heart. For such a life as that which has passed from among us, for so great a nature, hopes so noble and charity so abounding, for such faith in the eternal goodness, there must be a larger sphere than even he found here. Somewhere he must see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied. But, if his greatness and goodness argue the limitless opportunities of eternity, shall not our littleness and evil yield a stronger argument therefor? If his life needs the scope of infinity, what of ours, that are but just begun in the dim realm of longing after goodness and truth?

The great trouble with us is the sense of finality in this world and its experiences that grows and hardens about our souls, only to be broken by blows of agony; but, when once it is broken, how eagerly the quivering soul peers out, and, though it choke and strangle in the free air of the spirit, how pathetic are its efforts to spread its feeble wings in the warm atmosphere of eternal hope!

Why should we allow that shell of worldliness to grow up about us again? Do we not need the power of an endless life to help us to live

to-day? Is it only greatness and goodness that demand the scope of eternity? Do not weakness and sinfulness need the motive of endless life even more?

All is not to be lost or won in this world. Suppose your boy at school had no outlook from that sphere of training and discipline upon a larger sphere of action and achievement for which he is being prepared. He needs the spur and stimulus of manhood's opportunities beckoning him on. He can bear failure and the punishment of his wrong-doing; for he knows that he is not in the final stage of his life,—he is "not grown up." Is not this the great need of us all?

What of him whose sin has found him out in life's mid-career, destroying every pleasant prospect in this world, killing every earthly joy,—is there no hope for him? Then there is no hope for any of us. The distance between him and ourselves is not so great as the distance between us and our perfection. The time that it will take to make you full grown after the pattern of Jesus Christ may be longer than that required to mould him into the image of your attainments.

What is the good news for the sinner? Arise. Go to your Father. The world has no use for you, maybe. God has. Your lost joys may never return. You will not meet happiness again in all your journey through this world, but you

may meet righteousness; and that is better. This world is not your final stage. It is the school of life. Bow to its wholesome discipline, accept the condemnation it rightly visits upon you, and suffer to the full its punishments; but look beyond it, into the eternal years of growth toward God, upon which you may enter now by the door of repentance. "Cease to do evil, learn to do well," was the gospel on the lips of Isaiah. But it is no gospel unless with it be joined the promise of Jesus, "Ye shall be perfect"; and in that promise is the pledge of eternal life and endless growth.

One more saying from the Scripture which has received the illumination of death, and I am done.

"By dying he has destroyed the power of death" for some of us. The world of the unseen can never be so foreign and unfriendly a country again. It is that realm whither a forerunner hath for us entered. This strong one has walked through many bitter and mysterious experiences with us and for us; and we were not afraid, because he knew no fear. "I wish I could make other people feel about death as I do," he said once to a group of heart-broken mourners. Never have we come so near to sympathy with him in his thought of death as since we looked upon his face in its last sleep, to which the freed spirit lent the beauty of its own content.

The place that knew him here shall know him no more forever; but, as one wrote, "When I see Mr. Beecher again, I shall know I'm in heaven."

It may be that I have not been able to utter any of the thoughts that arise in you. That matters little. His death worketh in you, I am sure, according as his life had wrought itself into your consciousness. But, I beseech you, give heed to that working. It is God working in you. It is worth while for you to co-operate with him now, as never before, to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

From Other Clergymen.

Acquaintance with the last seven years only of Mr. Beecher's life cannot give any adequate estimate of the whole man. It was only the sunset beauties that we saw. But how many of these there were! How mellowed their tone, how restful to look upon, how inspiring to feel!

Mr. Beecher was my enigma. I never saw a nature which so baffled analysis. Yet he was the most single-motived of men and most childlike in his simplicity. To me there was something overpowering in his personality. It mattered little what he said: I always found myself assenting to his conclusions.

But it was as an interpreter of spiritual realities that Mr. Beecher seemed to me incomparable. To hear him simply read the New Testament was more stimulating and helpful than any commentary I have ever possessed. He seemed to know the mind of the Master, and he helped you to see it. One picture of Mr. Beecher can never fade from our memory. It is in his study. A young minister has come to him in trouble, theologically. One by one the good man, with almost infinite tact and kindness, untangles the threads

of the troublesome strand. Then, leaving them in such a way as to suggest their real insignificance, he turns to the attitude of the Christ,—fearlessness, candor, love, almost overcome with emotion as he contemplated that matchless example, eyes heavenward; and, streaming with tears, he whispered, "Keep close to him." The young minister went back to his ministry with a new purpose. And, somehow, he has always thought that was Mr. Beecher's hope.

WARREN D. MORE,
Pastor North Presbyterian Church.

That trait of Mr. Beecher's character which impressed me most was the width of his sympathy and affection. There are men so narrow and ill-natured that they reckon every one who differs from them a personal enemy; and such a spirit, which refuses to admit sincerity in others or to cultivate friendly personal relations with people of divergent convictions, is the only real bigotry. Mr. Beecher was altogether free from that taint; and, in consequence, he occupied in Elmira a position absolutely unique, and, I think, unparalleled elsewhere. Admittedly our first citizen, all sorts and conditions of men revered and loved him; and that general tribute to the essential

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loveliness of his nature is a far more eloquent panegyric than any words of praise for what he did or taught. What a man is counts for more than what he says. The speculative activity of his New England mind led him sometimes into error, none can doubt, since he himself avowed changing opinions, and declined to claim permanency for much of his teachings. But the man was always right, even though his doctrine was sometimes wrong; and to do God's will is far better than to have a formal orthodoxy which leaves God's will undone. We were touched and gratified every summer to see that venerable head bent humbly before God's altar in Grace Church. It testified to the inward unity which makes all who worship God incarnate one household, in heaven and on earth, however much unhappy outward barriers may disjoin them. And when, on the morning after his death, we offered the adorable sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ, we made mention of his name, praying that he might be numbered with God's saints in glory everlasting, and that his portion might be perpetual light and peace and rest. So in future years, on the anniversary, that same commemoration shall be made of him; and I know that the people of Grace Parish will unite with me in that act of charity, which our dear dead friend so often practised for others, asking for him what

Saint Paul besought for his dead companion, Onesiphorus, "The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day!"

WILLIAM HARMAN VAN ALLEN,
Rector of Grace Church.

Having come to Elmira so recently, and having during my short residence here been fully occupied with duties either within the college or in its interests out of town, it has not been my privilege to know Mr. Beecher at all intimately.

I have before me a letter received from Mr. Beecher on the day that I began work in connection with the college, and before it was my privilege to have met him. That letter, in addition to a substantial gift to the college, contained words of sympathy, encouragement, and hope, with the earnest prayer of a loving benediction. Many times have I read that letter, and always found it an inspiration in the days when hope for the future was not as it afterward became.

Many times, even until within a few weeks of his departure, has he spoken words of encouragement that could have come only from one possessed of a heart and head sanctified by the spirit of Him "who spake as never man spake."

Since the news of Mr. Beecher's death reached

the college, I have been greatly impressed by the deep sorrow manifested by the students, especially those to whom from infancy he was a great, loving, and helpful spiritual father. The aged saint of God for whom young people thus sorrow must have possessed in a high degree the masculine virtues of the Man of Nazareth and the gentle graces of the Spirit of God, who is love.

A. C. Mackenzie,
President of Elmira College.

Some nine or ten years ago, while pastor at Cincinnatus, Cortland County, N.Y., I first met the late Rev. T. K. Beecher. It was at this place that his lifelong friend, Rev. Edson Rogers, had preached for nearly forty years; and Mr. Beecher delighted to spend a part of his summer resting time in that quiet country village, at that time about sixteen miles from the railroad. Mr. Beecher loved the country,— its scenery, its quiet restfulness; and, seated on the grass, under the trees of the lawn of Mr. Rogers' home, I had my first conversation of any length with Mr. Beecher. I was very young in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I shall never forget the helpful hours of that summer afternoon. The one characteristic (apart from

brotherliness and great-heartedness) of his ministry that impressed me the most, in so far as I knew it, was his power in prayer. Mr. Beecher knew how to talk with God. Heaven seemed very near when he was addressing the throne. Not only were those who listened made to feel that "the Father himself loveth," but one seemed to be more than ever conscious that "Jesus was in the midst" when he led the great congregation in divine worship. Mr. Beecher evidently had a close and intimate acqaintance with God, and with his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

ELI PITTMAN,
Pastor Riverside Church.

From 1869 to 1874 the writer was pastor of the Baptist church in Addison, N.Y. During that time a house of worship was a prominent effort in our endeavors. A course of lectures was instituted to raise funds; and Rev. T. K. Beecher, of Elmira, was invited to lecture. Mr. Beecher came, gave a lecture that netted us fifty dollars, and, when asked the price of his service, replied: "Not anything. You are welcome to the service. I want a brick in all the churches." But his generosity was not satisfied

with giving the lecture free. He peremptorily declined to accept his railroad expenses.

S. D. Merrick,
Ex-Pastor Addison Baptist Church.

It was never my privilege to hear Mr. Beecher preach. In occasional brief addresses to which I have listened, his language was always so chaste, pertinent, and natural, so fitted to express his thought, that one would forget the words for the message they bore, and then would forget the message for the man that stood behind it, and, further still, would forget the man, at times, for the Christ who was in the orator and spoke through him.

I once heard Mr. Beecher say, "Though a man supposes he does not believe in Jesus Christ, yet if he believes in me, or in any fellow-man because he is Christ-like, then does he really believe in the Son of God."

Thomas K. Beecher was peculiarly gifted in prayer. I have oftenest heard him, where two or three, or at most four, were met together to pray. His prayers at funerals were most touching, trustful, helpful, and altogether his own. It was his custom to pray for the departed in such a manner as to startle the orthodox, and at the same time to prohibit exception.

Mr. Beecher was always at the monthly ministers' meeting, if possible, which was in a way confidential; and there his spirit would occasionally unveil itself to the wonder of the listeners.

During the later years of his life our brother had discouraging views of men and things. He was weighted down with the conditions of the world which are out of joint. His former liberalism seemed to give place to Calvinism of the straitest sect, so that he would remark to his ministerial brethren, "I'm the only consistent Presbyterian in the city."

ALLEN F. DE CAMP,

Pastor Lake Street Presbyterian Church.

Although my acquaintance with Mr. Beecher was recent and comparatively slight, I feel impelled to add my small tribute to his memory. Meeting him principally at the Theological and Literary Society, where he has been for the past year a very regular attendant, I could not help being impressed with a feeling of reverence for the truly venerable man, even in the "professed" decay of his great powers. I say "professed" intentionally; for, though he never failed to preface what he said with the statement that his infirmities ought to prevent his speaking and

make his contribution to the discussion of little value, I must say that the apology seemed unnecessary.

With hardly an exception, what Mr. Beecher said was one of the memorable things of the meeting, and, in my judgment, very many times also expressed the right view, if not always the popular one. I think I shall, however, best remember a talk I had with him one Thursday afternoon last summer. We came together on Gray Street by the park; and he began with kindly inquiring about my work, adding the pathetic statement as to his own: "I don't do any pastoral work now, Thomas, except funerals. I have had six of them this week." Just then a passing acquaintance stopped to speak to him. Introducing me (unexpectedly and to my gratification, I confess) as a "very stiff churchman who hasn't any narrowness or bigotry," Mr. Beecher went on to tell about being in a Brazilian town (so I understood) on Sunday, and, when the church bells rang on Sunday, seeing everybody go to church, because there was but one to go to. Then, laying his hand on my shoulder, and speaking evidently from his heart, he added, "We'll never have that here in Elmira, nor Christianity do its true work until we get rid of our divisions." No doubt we differed widely in our views and opinions about many things, but

in this matter we are wholly one; and I am glad to have that afternoon as my clearest recollection of Mr. Beecher.

L. B. Thomas,
Rector of Emmanuel Church.

An exalted representative of the best type of Christian manhood, in the person of Mr. Beecher, has departed; and the entire community is keenly sensitive to the loss. Mr. Beecher was a compound of rare qualities. Nature crowned him with gifts that made him *facile princeps* among men.

He was not a representative in the true sense, rather a man who lived, worked, and taught in a manner that had no prototype. He was distinctively Beecher in everything, but not consciously so. Nature stamped him. He reproduced nature's impressions, and these were decidedly pleasing. Beecher and benevolence are synonymous. It is not easy to exaggerate when speaking of his charity. I have known instances of its breadth that ordinary citizens could not afford to duplicate; and it was not alone the worthy object of charity, but also a sympathy for the unfortunate needy that emptied his pockets. Honest sincerity forced him to express convic-

tions which he thought were right; and the absence of a turbid and contentious spirit commands for him the good will and esteem of all, even of those who disagreed with him. In every sphere of life he is worthy of kindest memory.

J. J. Bloomer,
Pastor St. Patrick's Church.

From the Press.

From the Elmira "Advertiser," March 15, 1900.

There is no Elmira name of higher distinction or held in more affectionate recollection than that of him whose passing out of this life to another has filled the city with mourning. Few, indeed, are they who can remember when Thomas K. Beecher was not one of its first citizens. For nearly half a century his life has been spent in the service of his fellow-citizens as a teacher and preacher of righteousness, illustrated in his own conduct more fully than falls to the ability and purpose of more than a very few of common mortals. His death falls upon nearly every household in this city as a personal affliction, for everywhere he was at home and left the impress of his great heart and brilliant mind. Elsewhere in this issue appears a more extended notice of Mr. Beecher, though necessarily brief and inadequate. It is the day for mourning rather than of fulness of speech. Only in the most general way can a newspaper take up the story of one whose work has been conspicuous in many ways, and of whom sayings and doings may be recalled without number.

Mr. Beecher held that the family is the true unit of organized society. It is very much as a family that Elmira mourns for him to-day. It is always a question as to when the tragedy of death is most keenly felt by those who remain. There is one pain over death in youth, at the beginning of the glory and beauty that is possible to life, another pain over death in middle life, when the battle for standing room has been won and the man is in the maturity of his power, for service in business, the household, and the State; and still a different pain when death comes as the mind has become freighted with the wealth that only the years can bring, and the service of God has purified the heart. Perhaps one sorrow differeth from another only in depth of pain. From the human standpoint the extremity of the tragedy of death is in the passing from earth of one in whom greatness and goodness are in equipoise, and each is present in a remarkable degree.

That Mr. Beecher will be missed is but the feeblest of platitudes. Though much enfeebled of late, with eyes so dimmed as to make him feel imprisoned, the fire of genius flashed constantly through the clouds that gathered round him. A very able and original man and greatly distinguished, he might have risen to lofty heights of what men call eminence if he had

cared to do so. Metropolitan pulpits were open to him; and the press was at his command, as well as the prestige of one of the very first of American names. He found Elmira a haven when under the shadow of a measureless personal grief. He felt himself married to the little seedling church which grew to power under his leadership, and with that he was content. He seemed devoid of personal ambition. With a consecration that came not from laying on of hands, he devoted himself in this little corner of the world to the service of the Master, whom he worshipped absolutely. The printed word seems cold that speaks of the pastor and teacher, the friend and companion who knew in his lifetime no distinction of race or creed or station or quality in the distribution of his sympathy or his income. Through all the years he enjoyed the supreme felicity of owing no man anything, save only for the love that each man ought to owe his fellow. A skilled mechanic and master of many trades, he entered closely into the life and thought of toilers in many fields. He preached the gospel of work as ardently as that of faith, devotion, and prayer. His acts were as abundant and as beautiful, if possible, as his speech.

The greatest minds recognized their kinship with his commanding intellect and lofty spirit. The little children were glad when he was with

them, and ran after him with confidence in his interest in them. Among his most exquisite and finished utterances must be ranked his children's Sunday sermons. He was not content to inspire and instruct his hearers, but he organized their enthusiasms for practical service. Beginning with the youth, he planned and set in operation a regular course for the Sunday-school years before the international lesson system was thought of. It included a daily reading of Scripture, the commitment of the Sunday lessons to memory, and a weekly gift. He made these the condition of membership in the school. He drilled recruits for the Christian army from infancy, and on the most practical lines. When he came to build the Park Church, he put the same enlightened spirit into that. The church was a great family, in his mind; and he planned its home on that theory. The meeting-room and play-room and parlors and hospital and library and housekeeper's-room found a place in it, as well as the auditorium. For years the only public library in the city was in the Park Church. A gentleman, not of the congregation, went through the building one day, and to his joy discovered the library. He met Mr. Beecher afterward, and expressed his delight at finding such an admirable collection of books in the church home. He said that he would like to subscribe for its

privileges, and asked what would be the charge. The reply, in a surprised tone, was: "Why, nothing! It's a Christian church." He thought of his church as a university. The teaching passion was a primary instinct with him that never suffered diminution. Religion was the most practical thing in life, not something apart from it. He wanted the church to be a place next in attraction to the home itself.

He made it a place where there was a time to eat, to read, to converse, to dance, and to pray; and there was no break between them in principle. He succeeded in his plans, but not in a moment. Twenty years of preparation preceded the building of the church edifice, — years of foundation work in the hearts of his people. He never hastened, yet never rested in his noble purpose. He was a thinker and planner of the most practical sort in practical things. A radical in thought, he was conservative in method. And it ought to be said that he was understood and appreciated by his people to an extraordinary degree. The loyalty with which he was supported in his Christian work for forty-six years was simply magnificent. Differences of opinion there were without end over current affairs, but an absolute harmony of endeavor when it came to do things. Mr. Beecher never abused that confidence, never strained it. A wealthy member of

his church gave him leave, during a severe winter, to expend any sums that he saw fit to relieve distress. Mr. Beecher limited himself to matters of his personal knowledge, and found to his own surprise that he could not spend three hundred dollars honestly. His church knew that he was to be trusted, in like manner, and was never disappointed in him. He might be led to curious conclusions of thought through the witchery of a fancy that presented every theme to him first in the form of a picture, but no man could deal with facts with better average judgment. He knew how to get good results out of the infirmities and powers of human nature; and he became one of the most successful of ministers, when judged by even the most exacting standards.

His powerful intellect was inspired and held captive by his passionate faith in the character and person of the Christ. To his faith he added a light of devotion to others in a hundred ways, which made his teachings real and at the same time endeared him to thousands. To-day we mourn the fellow-citizen. To-morrow will take care of his blessed name and revered memory.

It was a fortunate day for Elmira, forty-six years ago, when Mr. Beecher came to this city,

THE OLD CHURCH.

and assumed the pastorate of what was then a small Congregational church. It was characteristic of him that he would not come as a candidate, but simply as a supply under an agreement to remain a single month. At the end of that period the agreement was renewed for another month, and was never afterward referred to in a business way. When he had been here nearly forty years, he referred to the contract, in a humorous way, in the pulpit, and remarked that either side could terminate the pastoral relation on thirty days' notice. He had been a teacher for a number of years after leaving college, and had entered the ministry but a short time before his appearance in Elmira. To the end of his life he felt that his true vocation was that of teaching, as distinguished from preaching in the usual sense; and the power of his ministry consisted largely in the fact that it was educational. He was not satisfied to win men to a Christian profession, but sought evermore earnestly to build them up into ways of Christian thinking and doing.

It is not maintained that other pastors have not the same purpose in mind in their ministrations, but Mr. Beecher has had no rival in ability and success in that department of clerical work. In early manhood he gave promise of becoming one of the great educators of the country, especially

in the direction of science, to which he strongly inclined. He had made a name for himself at twenty, and was then in correspondence with Darwin and other eminent men in foreign countries. As head-master of great schools in Hartford and Philadelphia, he proved himself not only an instructor of profound and original skill, but the possessor also of rare executive ability in management. When he seemed destined to a career in this field of work, he was asked one day to fill the pulpit in a Connecticut city church, because the pastor had become suddenly unable to perform his regular duty. Mr. Beecher complied. He felt that the invitation was a call to the ministry, and at once entered upon pastoral work. His father's house had been a theological seminary, so that a course in the study of theology was felt to be unnecessary. For years after Mr. Beecher entered the ministry, he was constantly sought as a speaker at teachers' institutes. The writer has never forgotten the impression made upon him, a lad of ten, at home in a little Western New York village, when Mr. Beecher came to attend the county institute. Of his lecture nothing remains in the memory; but of his method of questioning at the day session, the havoc he wrought with the preconceived notions of the leader and some of the teachers, an ineffaceable recollection remains.

And that was like him always. He never spoke merely to convince or to gain men's applause. His aim was to set them to thinking for themselves, and in the result he was one of the most successful of men. That such a man should stir up a village community, such as Elmira was before the war, was inevitable. Many opposed his opinions, and some with excess of zeal through literalness of understanding. There was reason also for dissent many times; for Mr. Beecher's interest in affairs was very great, and his discussions covered a wide range of themes besides those purely religious in their nature. In the treatment of questions of the day, as they are called, he was less happy, sometimes, than in handling the principles of religion. This may be explained, at a venture, by admitting his lack of historical perspective. He was not curious about the origin and development of ideas that have been most potent in their influence over the race, and took little note of their persistence or their manifestations in history. His own mind was so amazingly rich in ideas that he felt little need to consult the thoughts of other men embalmed in books. It seemed not to occur to him that the best books are the wisdom of the ablest men in their finest form. While his acquaintance with living men of distinction was very large and greatly enjoyed, he still had an invincible repug-

nance to the riches of the library, and seldom consulted books for anything more than facts.

As an exponent of religion, he was on solid ground and at his best. Words are wholly inadequate to set forth his power in the exposition of the gospel. In his hands the teachings of Jesus became vivid almost as in their original utterance. He thought, as he himself used to say, in pictures. While he stimulated the intellect, he warmed the heart to an even greater degree. Year after year argument and appeal were illuminated by illustrations in variety, pertinence, and beauty inexhaustible and incomparable. In the pulpit he was at once himself inspired and a perpetual source of inspiration to the noblest ideals of life and thought. The commonest things seemed made to his hand, as he wrought them into the glowing fabric of his speech. He knew nature at first hand, and nothing of her resources escaped his attention. Every theme that he touched was transformed from the commonplace into something that suggested the heavenlies. His thought was made completely effective by the noble presence, crowned by the magnificent great leonine head, the exquisite voice thrilling with endless richness of tone, and back of it the personality, of which it is almost impossible to write, for the countless memories of its brilliancy of intellect, its wealth of sympa-

thy, its affluence of humor, its unfailing courage, its overwhelming Christ-likeness.

But it was not as a man of genius, after all, that Mr. Beecher became so deeply endeared to this city. The whole city was his parish; yet never was he inconsiderate of other men, never given to proselyting. His theories were one thing; but he gave himself to the last ounce of his strength, the last cent of his resources, to his people. He lived his religion before he taught it. He regarded himself as a man of God called to minister to those in need. To him instinctively the sorrow-stricken turned for consolation. The tramp, the outcast, the bawd, as well as the cultivated, the rich, and the poor felt the power of that all-embracing heart. He was the welcome and honored guest in stateliest homes, and yet feared not to enter the house of infamy to minister to a dying, a despairing, or a desolate soul. He pronounced the eulogy of some of the noblest men and women of the city, and with equal tenderness of speech he stood by the casket of the deserted woman of shame. There are some small groceries in this city that he used to visit during the hard times. He always went in after dark, and bought, almost nightly, supplies of food, — all that he could carry, — and disappeared from sight. None knew where he distributed his gifts, save those to whom he took them, in snow

and rain, with his own hands and with kind words of sympathy that made double blessing. It seemed sometimes as if the sins and griefs and troubles of the whole city were gathered in the narrow continent of this one great heart.

He loved his fellow-men with an abiding affection that nothing could diminish and that kept him sweet to the last. Despite his vast experience of suffering and pain, he was not an ascetic. He was a musician and a singer. He was fond of games. He could write charming verses. He had a sense of humor that was unbounded, and was a most delightful guest. He took his appetite with him when he went out to dine. He was a very human man, of simple tastes and ways, so indifferent to literary finish that his writings fail to give any idea of his power over an assembly. The great Park Church is his visible monument; but he has a nobler monument than any built by hands of brick and stone in the hearts of those whom he led out of miry ways into paths of peace, in the love of those to whom he ministered so faithfully and so delicately, in the gratitude of those whom he fed with the truths of religion, and in the joy of those who followed after him in the endeavor to live after the pattern of Him whom Mr. Beecher loved to speak of as Jesus, the Christ of God.

He has fought a good fight, he has finished his

course, and with victorious resolution he has kept the faith.

Mr. Beecher's love of humanity was without limit or measure. It knew no lines of sect or locality or circumstance. To him every man was a brother, and to him every tale of need was a call to duty. His counsel, his warning, and his prayer were no freer than was his purse. Hence he died poor, yet rich; for the prayers of a united people went with him, and in the angel's book of gold his name was written "as one who loved the Lord," because "he loved his fellow-men."

This quality gave breadth to Mr. Beecher's life-work and influence in all his various activities. As he could not be a rigid sectarian in religious matters, so he could not be a partisan in politics. Though a man of peace, who could not lift the sword against his neighbor, he marched with the men whose duty took them into battle, ministered to the wounded on the field, pointed the way of faith to the dying, spread his hand in blessing over the grave of the soldier dead, and spoke words of comfort and grace to the hearts crushed with sorrow. The highest testimony that could be given to Mr. Beecher's beneficent influence is unspoken. It is felt in the sense of personal loss that thrills every breast.

"Think not the good,
The gentle deeds of mercy thou hast done
Shall die forgotten all: the poor, the prisoner,
The fatherless, the friendless, and the widow
Who daily owned the bounty of thy hand
Shall cry to Heaven to call a blessing on thee."

Nearly twenty-five years ago Mr. Beecher conceived the idea of a small club of gentlemen, who should meet once a month during the winter to listen to a paper read by members in turn, and then open to discussion. A luncheon was also to be an incident of the gathering. Out of that suggestion sprang Our Club, which has continued ever since that time with an average membership of about a dozen men. It has never had any organization, neither president, secretary, records, dues, nor reports. In that little company Mr. Beecher was at his best intellectually; for it furnished him that acute and fearless criticism which clergymen seldom hear about their own work, and it revealed to the others the immense and daring range of his speculation, his extraordinary power of statement, his fertility in vivid illustration, his vast accumulation of practical knowledge, his flashing wit and Rabelaisian wealth of humor. The discussions were always impromptu, for the writer's theme was never announced in advance of the meeting. The

play of Mr. Beecher's mind was a never-failing source of wonder and delight, where no one was expected to agree with any one else. Only a few months ago Mr. Beecher held the club in his regular turn. He was unable to prepare a paper, owing to his greatly impaired vision, and therefore spoke extempore. He began in this way: "When I was just out of college, my brother Henry and I were working up some matters together. He used to say, 'Tom, you will have to work all your life after the fashion of the grasshopper,—jump first, and then look around to see where you will light.'" His theme was the impulse in man to feel after God, if haply he may find him,—the inability of the reason to satisfy the heart through the power of the intellect. It was a most suggestive and beautiful talk, somewhat discursive withal; and, when it was finished, he said, with his charming smile, "Well, I've lit." On another occasion, not long ago, a paper was read which tended to support the doctrine that Saint Paul was the founder of Christianity. Mr. Beecher sat for some time without speaking after the discussion began. Then he merely quoted from Saint Paul's writings what the apostle had said on that point, and for ten minutes, with absolute accuracy of memory, recalled passage after passage, until the cumulative effect was overpowering.

From the "Daily Gazette and Free Press," March 15, 1900.

The most beloved citizen of Elmira is dead. The man of Christ-like life, the man without an enemy, the man with a universality of friends, the man of many parts, will be seen no more among us.

For years longer than the most of us have lived, Thomas K. Beecher has held the warmest place in the hearts of the greatest number. Who shall attempt in self-confidence to philosophize upon his life and his works? His life was an example. It is a petty estimate of his works which stops with the measurements of a great and powerful and prosperous church. Park Church is but one of the items. Someway and somehow he laid hold on the masses beyond any man who has preached the word of God in this city.

First of all in the composition of Thomas K. Beecher was his realization and love of God. Commensurate with the latter was his love for his fellow-man. Ben Adhem's name led all the rest in the chronicle of the angel writing in the book of gold. For the same reason, as "one who loves his fellow-men," Beecher was loved by his fellow-men. His power with them was great,

and his name will stand high on the same golden record. The man who loves his fellows must be strong with them.

Whoever sat under the pulpit ministrations of Thomas K. Beecher noted oft the light of inspiration upon his countenance. The halo is pictured above the heads of the saints. That divine light shone upon his face when speaking the faith that was in him. More convincing than words, more reassuring than texts, more persuading than eloquent utterance was that celestial radiance. Most of us have seen it when he grasped our hands, when he leaned over our dying, when he stood beside our dead. That heavenly lustre was lighted by love of man and certainty of God. None ever doubted his sympathy. None ever passed beyond the bounds of his love and hope. The wickedest man and the most sinful woman turned to him first of all clergymen, when feeling the movings of the spark which never wholly dies. What better foundation for an epitaph for a man of God! What better demonstration of love of man, the best reflection of love of God! The sick and sinful turned to him. When they had one of their number to consign to the grave, they thought first of Beecher; and Beecher never failed them.

The cheerfulness of Thomas K. Beecher's religion was another tie between him and the

hearts of the masses. His was the perfect serenity. He loved a joke. He could tell and enjoy a good story. He placed no ban upon harmless amusements. He harnessed them to good purposes. He did not set the sad and sombre among the requirements of religious life. He did not place before youth the enigma, "How to be happy, though a Christian." He was an example of the geniality and joyousness to be found in religious life. The high-spirited lad accepted his counsels, who would have been indifferent to the same teachings from another.

Breadth of mind and boundless charity were yoked with other powerful forces for good. The priest, the rabbi, and the rector will mourn his death. He recognized in them fellow-workers for the good of mankind. He saw in them lovers of the race and strivers for its upbuilding and salvation. How much harm have bigots wrought the world? It cannot be measured or guessed. How much of doubt and indifference and denial are due to denominational strife? Who can say? But this we know, that Thomas K. Beecher had in it no part. Not the least of his services was his preaching of the duties of good citizenship. Here, as elsewhere, he advised and persuaded with all his liberality, charity, and yet tense righteousness.

The character of the man whom the city, and

far beyond the city, mourn, was a union of might and modesty. His modesty increased his might. He was powerful in persuading to righteousness. No man was ever less a self-seeker. He not only preached, but practised. His purse was as open as his heart. A ten-dollar bill in his pocket was an annoyance to him until he could find somebody to give it to. He could not enjoy two overcoats if he knew any one was shivering. As clergyman and citizen and philosopher and workman, we shall not look upon his like again. Of some moulds there is never but one man. He loved mankind, and all of mankind that knew him loved him. The mainspring of his life and works was his consciousness of God, his love of man. His life and works harmonized with their inspiration.

The grand old man has parted the veil. The glorious light of the New Jerusalem has gladdened his earth-dimmed eyes. He has gone, not as the slave to an unearned freedom, not as an hireling to an earned reward, but as a son to occupy the room long prepared in his Father's mansion.

His is the great mind, the broad view. No school can dwarf him, no class enclose his ever-expanding heart, no party bind his intellect with precedents and forms. He is not dead. He has

stepped for the moment into another room of the many-mansioned house, whither he waits to welcome us and to explain — as he never could on earth — the length and breadth, the height and depth, of the Father's love. His is a religion of pure worship. Underneath the formalism bred in him, and from which he could not escape and by which the structure of his faith was borne aloft, the living, pulsing life within breathed forth the one conception, the one hope, — the Fatherhood of God and the sonship of man. The foundation of his religion is righteousness. "Dost thou believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?" means with him, Are you willing to follow him in all righteous ways through life, despising hypocrisy and shams, willing to suffer for the right, being reviled, yet reviling not, ever holding high the eternal standard of right as measured over against his life, who lived so nobly and died so grandly? The final text of his life on earth is, "Religion without righteousness is a cesspool of idolatry."

What he has done for our city will never be half comprehended until the day when the secrets of all hearts are revealed. He has dwelt among us, filled with the conception of the heart and mind of Jesus, to seek and save the individual. As Jesus came into the world and lived and still lives among us, seeking to make the individuals

better and despising organization, except such as comes to pass between saved and redeemed saints, drawn together by memories of their lost condition and renewed hopes of future bliss, so he abhorred constitution and by-laws, and ridiculed forms and orders. If the life of faith and hope no longer permeated a form of words, he had no patience to allow their continued use. His seedling church, unlike all that had gone before and bearing a new fruit of independent yet fervent worshippers, is a protest against dead creeds of the past and the rules of precedent. "That is right which tends toward life and good, that is wrong which tends toward death and evil," was the formula which enabled him quickly to determine the right and wrong of any situation in which he might be placed. "His brother's need was his opportunity." We who have been equipped for the battle of life and temptation by his maxims and example feel rather than realize his greatness. His greatness and goodness none will dispute. His faults, and the noble fight he made to conquer them, but add to the lustre of his fame. For almost a half-century he has gone out and in among us, a ray of sunshine at our marriage feasts, a benediction in the death-darkened homes. He touched us on all sides. While this generation lasts, his power will be strong; and he will dwell among us in our hearts

to minister of the same spirit for the same Master.

As a teacher, we shall never see his like. Few such are born. He expounded Scripture, not as the scholar with the dissecting knife, but by the power of the spirit, led by the same inspiration that moved the writers of old.

His prayers have been answered. While yet able to carry the burdens of others and minister in the name of his beloved Master, he has gone to meet the countless host of those who have preceded him and join in the glorified worship of the redeemed. Those who knew him best will rejoice with him in that broader field of opportunity to which he is gone.

Forty-six years ago a little struggling Congregational church of this city called to its pastorate Thomas K. Beecher. A few old residents remember his first sermon.

They tell us of the tall, spare young man who walked down the aisle with his cap in his hand, — a thing unheard of in a minister of those days, — ascended the pulpit, and commenced a pastorate that has continued almost half a century.

At first people did not know how to take him. He was so unconventional, so independent in thought and speech and action, that the conserva-

tive men of those days had grave doubts as to his power for usefulness. But, as time went on, they found that he had elements of strength which made him unique among the men of his day.

His wonderful powers of expression, his great learning, his sympathy and love for his fellow-men of low and high degree, his disregard for dogma, and his broad catholicity soon won for him a place in the hearts of the entire community, which, notwithstanding many eccentricities of character and conduct, he never lost; and for more than forty years he has been the first man in Elmira.

His great tolerance of opinion led him to defend things which to many were without the pale of right or religion. Called by a church whose foundations had been laid by Abolitionists, he would in his pulpit say good things of slavery and slaveholders. A believer in temperance and opposed to the liquor traffic, he had good words for many engaged in that traffic.

When the terrible secession struggle came on, he openly argued, pro and con, the right of a State, under the Constitution, to secede from the Union. But, when war came, he was first and foremost in his efforts to uphold the Union. His speeches and sermons, urging enlistments for our armies, were marvels of power and eloquence. He sent the young men of his church and city,

who loved him as a father, to the front with a God-speed, spoken with welling eyes and faltering voice; and then, that his faith might be sealed by his works, he went himself. After the war he resumed his pastorate with increased and increasing power.

But his labors were not confined to his own church and people. His church became too small for him. He rented the Opera House, and for some years, and until the erection of the present Park Church, held Sunday evening meetings for the entire city.

He was a voluminous writer for the press, his Saturday "Miscellany" being for years a principal feature of one of the daily papers.

His interest in public affairs always continued. He believed and acted upon the belief that a minister is a man and a citizen with the same duties and responsibilities as other citizens. And, withal, he was not ambitious or self-seeking. He was content,—nay, more than content with his lot. He loved Elmira and Elmira loved him.

As he grew older, his spiritual strength increased; and he thought and talked less of things of this world and more of the world to come. We saw him growing feebler in body, and knew he was ripening for the world beyond.

One of the marked changes of the last half of

the nineteenth century has been the loss in prestige and power and influence of the clergy. If there were more ministers like Mr. Beecher, the church and clergy would have a stronger hold on the people.

From the "Reformatory Summary."

The life of Mr. Beecher in Elmira is singular, in that it is looked up to and reverenced by all classes alike. His strong personality, and his trueness to the ideal, could not be put more fully before men than by the eulogies of the press of the city, both in official and contributed articles. The power, generosity, and force of the man could in no better way be measured, if such a term could be used. "The teacher," as he was wont to have himself called, has left a void that will be hard to fill again.

Rev. Thomas K. Beecher's relations with the Reformatory extend over a period of many years. The interested kindness and helpfulness that were characteristic of the man were not for the outside world alone. The inmates here heard and benefited by his sayings; and his frequent talks on the spiritual man were looked forward to with interest, as coming from one who was the teaching preacher and not the preaching teacher.

During his failing health, extending over a year back, it has been but seldom that he has been heard here. But previous to that time his interest in and desire to help the inmates was made frequently the occasion of Sunday afternoon talks. He has been missed in the past year, and he will be missed in the future years. But his memory will survive in the hearts of many of his former hearers.

From the Elmira "Evening Star," March 15, 1900.

In the death of Rev. Thomas K. Beecher the young men of Elmira have lost a friend. Mr. Beecher had a particular liking for young men; and the boys of forty years ago remained as boys with him long after the hair had whitened and the bodies had become enfeebled. He was a man of broad business views; and his advice was eagerly sought by many young men starting out in life, as well as by many city business men who are now in successful lines. Mr. Beecher had office hours in the parlors of the Park Church on certain days of the week; and it was not an uncommon sight to see him in conference with young men, advising them in the best methods toward business success. His wide experience in a practical business life made his counsels of

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THE STUDY.

great value; while the open honesty of the man in refusing to take glory to himself, but rather to give credit to others, endeared him to the hearts of the men. It was only a few days before his last illness, while counselling a professional friend in affliction, that the good man said, "My brother, place yourself out of the case entirely, and give God the place and the glory." It was so throughout the life of the pastor who led his flock into pastures of peace. In a talk with the writer not long ago, Father Beecher showed the unselfish side of his career, when he lamented that he could not look back over his long life and see a single good thing that he had ever accomplished. He did not count the many souls turned for the better by his advice and influence as victories for himself, but rather gave the glory to his God and placed self out of the question.

Mr. Beecher knew men, and had acquired the great secret of knowing how to handle them. His great experience as a pastor, also several years in the army as a chaplain, and the natural tact of the man, gave him a power to lead men. He never lost their confidence nor goaded them on, but won their hearts through love, which was shown in his every-day life. He often confessed to his fellows that he was not without mistakes in life, but was sorry for them, and ever stood ready to learn for the better and to correct

the errors. Father Beecher was an admirer of the mechanic and workingman, for he always counted himself one of their number and a wage-earner. When the Park Church was erected, he made a personal inspection of every foot of the masonry and the structure entire as it was placed in position by the mechanics. Mr. Beecher was also one of the inspectors upon the erection of the Masonic Temple, with the result that builders pronounce the two buildings to be among the strongest in the city. The faithful pastor in his talks drew many practical illustrations from his ideas of mechanical work, and contended that young people should always have a good idea of building, in order to build up a substantial character. Many young men, who have been in straitened financial circumstances, have received assistance at the hands of the good man, who many times sacrificed all rather than that a worthy person in need might be made to suffer. Mr. Beecher never entered into a controversy, as he disliked notoriety of that order. His statements were plain and to the point, and were given in love. In the passing out of life of the beloved man, the entire city has sustained a severe loss; but particularly keen is the blow to the men whom he knew and met as a spiritual leader. His love for God and the Master was high over every other thing in his life, and he pointed men

to the higher life, which he had been permitted to live unselfishly for so many years. To the young men he pointed to God as the shaper and leader of a happy Christian life, and to the older men he appealed to live the true life as a pattern and inspiration for the young.

From the Elmira "Sunday Telegram," March 18, 1900.

There are few, indeed, who are living in Elmira that can remember this city when Rev. Thomas K. Beecher was not a clergyman here, — when he was not a teacher of morals and right living, consecrated to tireless industry in good works. It will seem a strange thing not to see that remarkable man in his ceaseless round of ecclesiastical toil, not to hear of him wherever charity or patriotism call for the union of true and faithful citizens, and not to be amazed at the persistence of a vigor that seemed to defy both the elements and the strides of time.

But that venerable teacher was claimed Wednesday morning by death, and that laborious servant of his church and his God is at rest. Mr. Beecher had the distinction of being the oldest active clergyman in Elmira and longest in service here, covering a period in excess of forty-six

years. He assumed his pastorate here when men who are now passed or passing the middle years of life were still lisping the accents of infancy. And for nearly half a century full of works, he has walked or driven up and down the streets of Elmira, from his beautiful little hillside home. It would be hard to compute, and still harder to make real to the imagination, the number of times that he has stood before his people as a teacher of right living, has officiated at baptism, at the marriage of youth, the burial of age, or to number the words of affectionate counsel that he has given to the novitiate in the church's service or to the heavily-laden with life's troubles. At his church, in its play-room, in its library and lecture-room, in his home, in the homes of his church circle, his benignant face and his comforting words were ministries of mercy. It is not surprising that on the walls of the homes of thousands of people in this city his pictured face is cherished as though he had been of saintliest fame.

Respect is due even from those of different beliefs to one who in singleness of purpose gives the unstinted energy of his nature to the propagation of his best ideas of exalted living. The mildness of manner of this famous Beecher was not the expression of weakness. With the zeal of the pioneer he had the comprehension of the

architect of institutions and the strength of the builder of large edifices. The imposing church edifice, erected under his pastorate and in which his remains lay for hours in state, guarded by comrades of the Grand Army of the Republic, is directly traceable to his courageous initiative and his undaunted fostering. All his fulness of effort for his own church was accompanied by a remarkable liberality of attitude toward other denominations, and a fraternity of fellowship with the pastors of other ecclesiastical ordination and with all religious workers, that has been rare at any time, and that with Mr. Beecher began upon his advent in Elmira, and when the freedom of such amity was rarer than it is now. The hand with which he would spread the seeds of his own creed was ready to clasp the hand of any good man, and to do it with the sense of the highest consistency.

Mr. Beecher was not only a minister, but a soldier; a man to love and be loved; a man not to fear, but to respect. He was a patriot of patriots, but never proscriptive. He was inspired by the highest American enthusiasm; and from the beginning to the close of the war this was illustrated by that flag of our Union which waved the stars and stripes of loyalty and the red, white, and blue of patriotism in the sight of all the people from above the dome of the old

Park Church. If the end of such a man was not peaceful, death would be unbefitting. Mr. Beecher's end was like that of one who

> "Wraps the drapery of his couch
> About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

His life went out, like a candle in a calm and breezeless room, without a flicker, when it had burned out. And then a faithful and distinguished churchman, a good and public-spirited citizen, and a warm-hearted lover of human kind had passed into the new life. The tribute of Elmira may well be as wide as its citizenship, because Mr. Beecher's demise removes one of the best and ablest supporters of the city's highest interests. He goes to his final home — to the "new life" to which his heart always turned — followed by the love and lamentations of all his fellow-beings who knew him, and, knowing him, appreciated his virtues and comprehended the full value of his great life-work: —

> "O good gray head which all men knew,
> O iron nerve to true occasion true!
> O fall'n at length that tower of strength
> Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew!
> Such was he whom we deplore.
> The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er."

"*Inquire of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of the fathers. Shall they not teach thee?*"

One day the writer of the following lines said to Mr. Beecher, "I have recently come upon the line of your genealogical descent through your mother"; but the indifference of the reply chilled the stream of conversation on that topic, and the information was frozen in.

Such was the innate modesty and self-abnegation of Thomas K. Beecher that anything that was of personal consequence to himself only was instantly put behind him.

Thinking, however, there may be some among his friends who will take a deeper interest in such things and be glad to know in a short and simple way the line of his ancestry, I have prepared the following: —

Thomas Kennicut Beecher was a lineal descendant of Isaac Beecher, who was at New Haven in 1641. Isaac is generally supposed to have been the son of John Beecher, who was one of the seven sent to the site of the New Haven Colony, and who died before the main body arrived. Be that as it may, the line from Isaac down is simple and direct. Not much is known of Isaac. Joseph Beecher, son of Isaac, married

a Pomeroy. He was a man of extraordinary physical strength, and could lift a barrel of cider and drink from the bung-hole. His son, Nathaniel, was a blacksmith. He married Sarah Sperry. By her, he had among other children David, who in his day was one of the best-read men in New England, and among other things was *five times married.* He was also a blacksmith. A son of his third wife, Esther Lyman, was Lyman Beecher, who was the father of Thomas Kennicut. Who Lyman was, you all know.

Lyman was married three times; and Thomas K. was the son of his second wife, Harriet Porter. Thomas K. was born Feb. 10, 1824, at Litchfield, Conn.

His mother, Harriet Porter, was a descendant from John Porter, who was born in Dorset, England, in 1596. He was at Hingham, Mass., in 1635, and afterward moved to Salem. He was a deputy to the General Court in 1644, was a man of energy and influence, and again a deputy in 1668. His wife's name was Mary.

His son Samuel was a mariner, and married Hannah Dodge. He had but one child, a son John.

John was a maltster and farmer, a man of high respectability, and member of General Court in the years 1723 to 1729, inclusive. He married

Lydia Herrick; and their family consisted of eleven children, most of whom lived to extreme old age. Aggregate age of the eleven at death nine hundred and fifty-five years; oldest, one hundred; youngest at death, sixty; average age, eighty-seven years.

The fifth child, Benjamin, continues our line, was born in 1692, married Sarah Tyler, had five children. His trade was carpentry. His age at death, eighty-nine.

His son Moses married Mary Chadwick; and they were parents of eight children. Their fifth child, Aaron, was born March 28, 1752. He was a physician, and eminent in his profession. Married Pauline King. She was a sister of Hon. Rufus King, first United States senator from New York, and half-sister of Hon. William King, the first governor of Maine. Dr. Aaron and Pauline, his wife, had twelve children,—good big wholesome families they had in those days; and the seventh child was Harriet, who married Lyman Beecher. She was born April 5, 1790, and married Lyman Beecher Oct. 29, 1817. Their children were Frederic (died in infancy), Isabella, Thomas Kennicut, and James. She died in 1835.

So here we have the lines of blood united. Isaac Beecher (John[1]) and John Porter, one from London or vicinity, the other from Dorset, Eng-

land. Both of the best sturdy Puritan stock. The blossom and fruit, our late loved and ever venerated Rev. Thomas K. Beecher, of Elmira, N. Y. May he rest in peace!

I cannot forbear to copy the words of Mrs. Stowe, describing the advent of the new mother into the Beecher household: —

"I was about six years old, and slept in the nursery with my two younger brothers. We knew that father was gone away somewhere on a journey, and was expected home; and therefore the sound of a bustle or disturbance in the house more easily awoke us. We heard father's voice in the entry, and started up in our little beds, crying out as he entered our room, 'Why, here's pa!' A cheerful voice called out from behind him, 'And here's ma.'

"A beautiful lady, very fair, with bright blue eyes, and soft auburn hair bound round with a black velvet bandeau, came into the room, smiling, eager, and happy-looking, and, coming up to our beds, kissed us, and told us that she loved little children, and that she would be our mother. We wanted forthwith to get up and be dressed, but she pacified us with the promise that we should find her in the morning.

"Never did mother-in-law [step-mother] make a prettier or sweeter impression. The next

morning, I remember, we looked at her with awe. She seemed to us so fair, so delicate, so elegant, that we were almost afraid to go near her. We must have been rough, red-cheeked, hearty, country children,—honest, obedient, and bashful. She was peculiarly dainty and neat in all her ways and arrangements; and I remember I used to feel breezy and rough and rude in her presence. We felt a little in awe of her, as if she were a strange princess rather than our own mamma; but her voice was very sweet, her ways of moving and speaking very graceful, and she took us up in her lap and let us play with her beautiful hands, which seemed wonderful things, made of pearl, and ornamented with strange rings."

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